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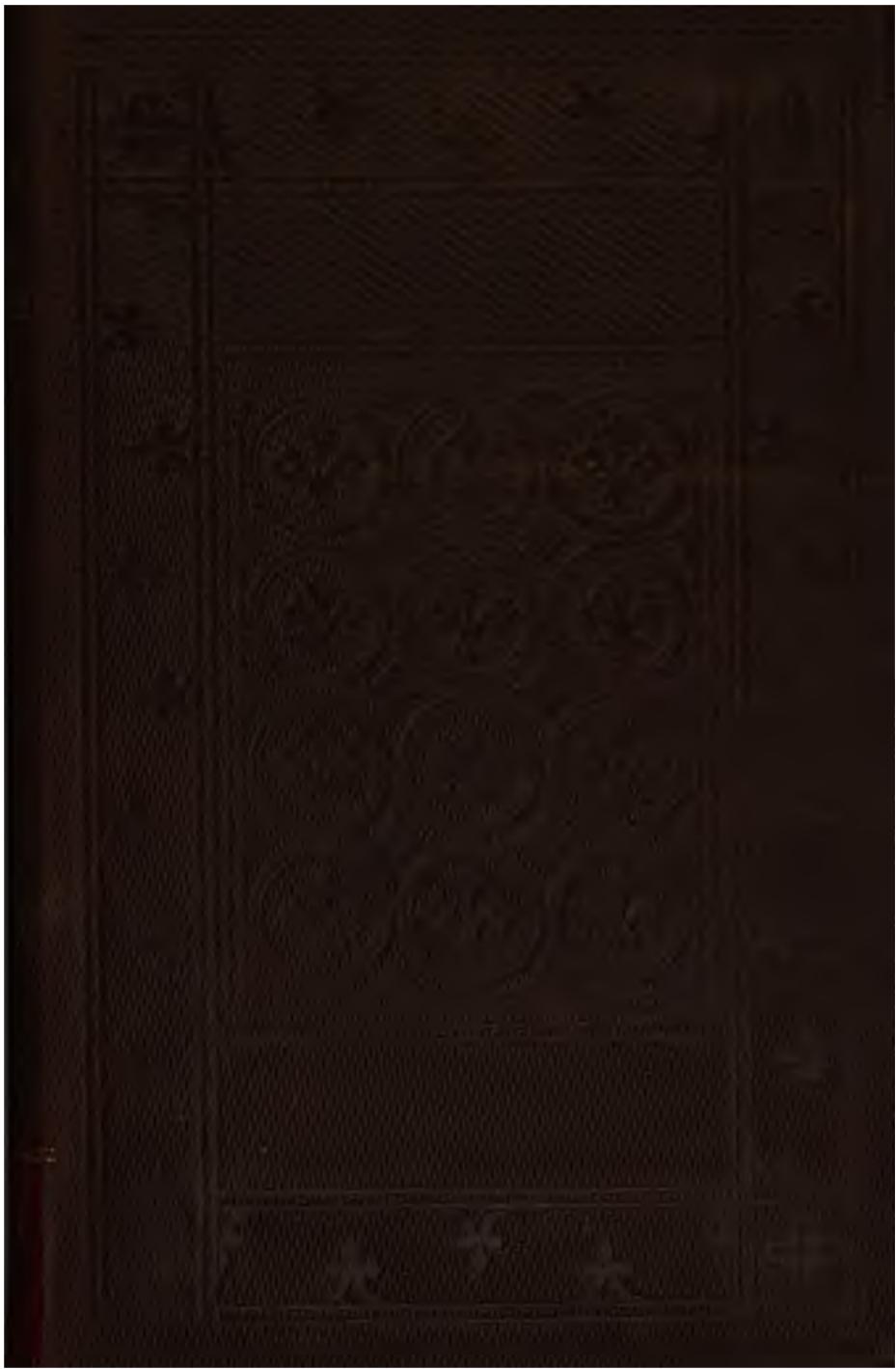
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JESUS THE KING REVELED.

A SECRET MEMOIR

MELISE H. M. BROWNLOW;

WITH A SERMON,

PRAACHED ON OCCASION OF HER DEATH.

BY HER BROTHER,

THE REV. W. R. BROWNLOW, M.A.,
TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

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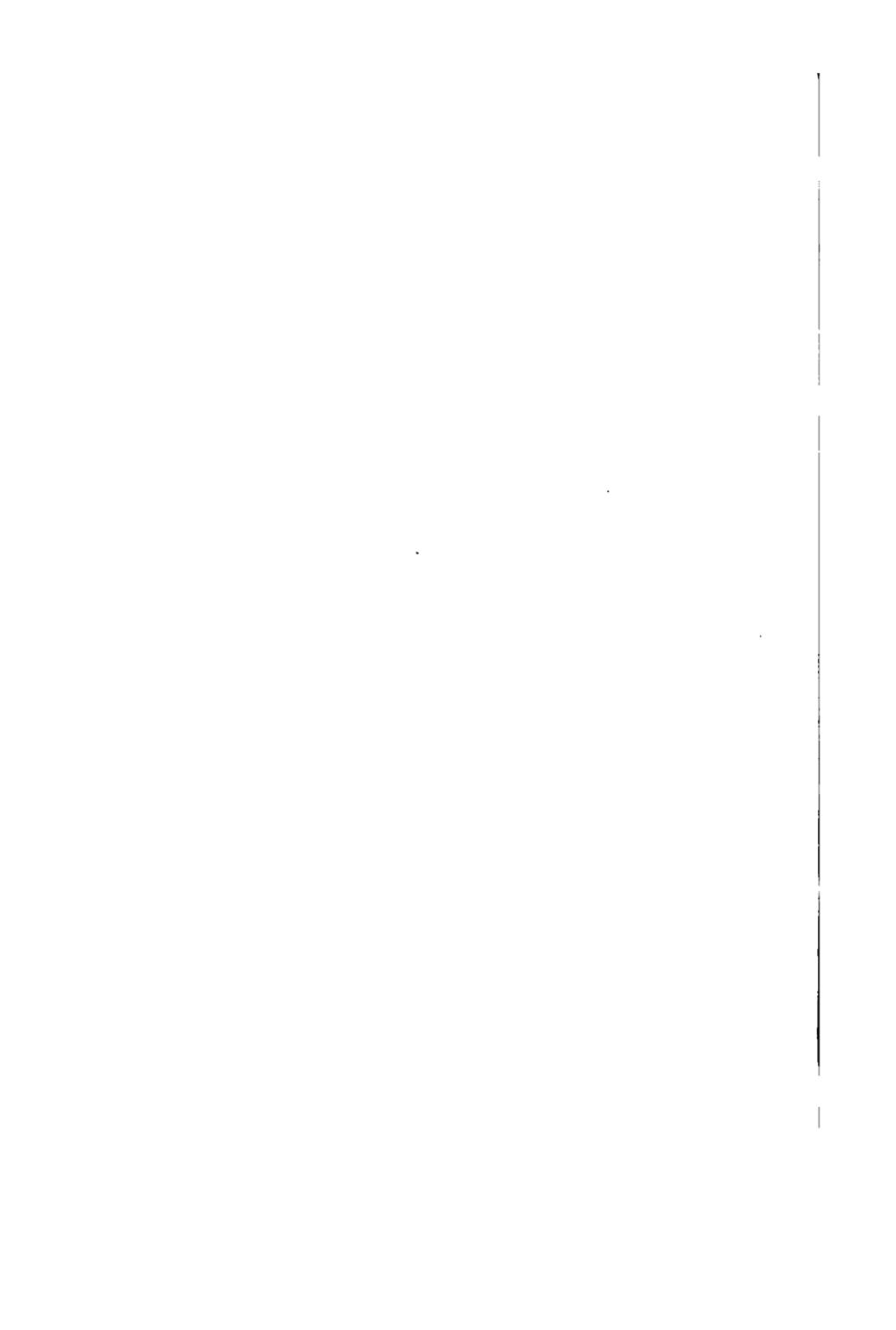
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TO
MY FATHER AND MOTHER,
THIS MEMORIAL
OF
THEIR BELOVED CHILD
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED,
WITH THE PRAYER
THAT HE WHO SAID
"THE MAID IS NOT DEAD, BUT SLEEPETH,"
MAY COMFORT THEM
WITH THE HOPE OF SOON MEETING AGAIN
HRR
WHO, IN THESE PAGES,
"BEING DEAD, YET SPEAKETH."



P R E F A C E.

ANY one who presumes to add to the already too voluminous pile of religious biography, may well be asked to give his reasons for so doing. The cause of the publication of the present memoir was simply this. The author was requested to publish the sermon which he preached on occasion of his sister's death, and conceived that a short account of the Life and Death of that sister would be valued by those who knew her. After he had commenced this account, materials came in upon him of a nature he little expected, in the shape of a very interesting correspondence. He had often felt the difficulty of recommending books containing the experience of devout women; for many of them indirectly inculcate unsound principles when they refer to the Church and the Sacraments, which mar their usefulness; and those which are derived from foreign sources however valuable to members of another Communion, can hardly be recommended without a caution which somewhat destroys the

confidence of the reader. It appeared to him that the letters in this memoir were free from these objections, and with a few remarks to connect them together, might be safely placed in the hands of any child of the English Church.

He therefore ventures to submit them to the Christian public, not without a considerable misgiving lest those who knew not his beloved sister personally, may through his negligence form an erroneous estimate of her character, still he trusts that as she was by the grace of God the means of winning several of her companions to the sweet and pleasant paths of heavenly wisdom, so now being dead she may yet speak to some who never came within her influence when she was on earth.

The Author is painfully conscious of his liability to err, and therefore desires humbly to submit his own judgment on any controverted questions to the Divine authority of Holy Scripture as interpreted by the Catholic Church, and held by that portion of it in which it has pleased God to place him.

W. R. B.

Christmas, 1857.

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A SHORT MEMOIR
OF
MELISE H. M. BROWNLOW.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH—CHILDHOOD—SCHOOL—CONFIRMATION AND FIRST COMMUNION—SERIOUS ILLNESS—LETTERS ON RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS.

“He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom.”

MELISE HENRIETTA MARIA, the only daughter of the Rev. William Brownlow, was born at the Rectory, Wilmslow, Cheshire, on the 12th of December, 1833. I am able to say but little of her early life, since it has been only during the last three years that I have really *known* her. She was a very reserved child; but it is evident that the HOLY SPIRIT, Who is ever waiting to confirm the love of those who have been baptized through Him into the Body of CHRIST, was drawing her heart and affections to submit to the easy yoke of

her SAVIOUR at a very early age. If our holy religion did not encourage us to expect this, the vigilance of the most anxious parent would be in vain; for the subtil enemy of our souls distils his deadly poison into the heart, often before the child appears capable of consenting to evil; and unless the HOLY SPIRIT were present to apply the remedy with equal secrecy and with far greater power, the condition of those of Whom JESUS said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," would be hopeless indeed. Still, religious tendencies are often observed in children which come to nothing afterwards, because they have been merely *impressions*, and the child's *will* has not really been given up to God.

A friend of Melise's, to whom she had spoken of the goodness of God, in thus early drawing her to Himself, gives the following account of the effect of these blessed operations of the HOLY GHOST upon her heart. "It was when Melise was about nine years old, she once told me, that she first began seriously to *think*. Her great desire was to find out 'the way to be good;' for that there was such a thing as holiness she was quite convinced, but how to find it she was wholly at a loss, and knew not where to turn for help. She communicated her difficulty to her cousin R. (who was educated with her and grew up with her as a sister), but she could throw no light upon the subject, though they had many discussions together regarding it, and used to learn hymns to repeat to each other in order to encourage one another to be good. She

longed most earnestly to ask the help and advice of the curates of her father's parish, and sometimes wondered whether she could make up her mind to do so ; but her courage failed her, for they looked upon her merely as a child and a plaything, little thinking what thoughts were working in her mind. When a new curate came, she hoped she might be able to tell her difficulty to him, but found it equally impossible, and several years passed without her gaining the desired information." She searched the books she had access to, especially the " Pilgrim's Progress," in hopes of finding some directions how she ought to act in order to please God, but in vain. At last, when she was about twelve, the two children obtained possession of the " Life of Henry Martyn," which they read with the greatest interest, hoping that it would clear up all that seemed so misty and obscure. " And gradually as Melise read, she began to see, though still dimly and imperfectly, what this ' goodness ' really was, and how she might attain it." From her own allusion to this, page 20, it is clear that she found the same JESUS who had received Henry Martyn, near at hand to give her that pardon and peace her soul required ; indeed, so precious was He to her even then, that she was able to say to her cousin, " To me to live is CHRIST, and to die is gain."

This is all that I have been able to learn of Melise's early religious history. I can recall her, as she seemed to me all through her girlhood, a quiet, gentle, innocent child ; loving her home and

all its inmates with a deep affection which shrank from expressing itself lest it should offend ; anxious to please us all, and grateful for every thing that was done for her. I think I can see her now, with her Bible before her, spending so happily those Sunday evenings which I used to think so long and wearisome, either in preparing for her class in the school, or reading for her own profit. We have found note-books, in which she appears to have entered abstracts of the sermons in Church for her own use.

In one of these she says, *June 1st. [1848]*, "I find great difficulty in keeping my thoughts on heavenly things instead of earthly. I cannot overcome my imagination, and find great difficulty in humbling pride and vanity. I find too much irreverence in my prayers, but pray to God to overcome this proud and naughty spirit, and to give me a contrite and humble one. In looking back this last month, I find that I have made very little [progress] in my upward course; but I trust, through the grace of God assisting me, I may at length overcome my passions."

Sunday, June 4th. "We have had much thunder and rain lately; it has seemed as if the rain would never entirely go away, but after many very heavy showers, one after the other, on looking at the still slightly clouded sky, I can see a small part of a rainbow. It seems as if God still remembered His people, and would give them hopes of a brighter sky and rest from all their sins. Oh! when that glorious day arrives, happy, thrice happy, will they

be who shall enter and sit down at the right hand of God! My most fervent prayer is, that I may be among the number."

The following extract from a letter written in her fifteenth year to a cousin, to whom she was much attached, shows her anxiety about the welfare of her brother, who was just then going up to Cambridge; and also her longing for Christian sympathy:

To Miss E. W.—.

"October, 1848.

"My dearest E—,

"* * * William went away last Monday week. It did not seem like going to school, as he will now be left so much to himself; and I dare say you will sympathise with me, when I say I feel anxious about him, as you must have felt much more so when M— left you. So now, dear E—, we can unite in our prayers for our brothers, as they are both placed in great temptation and danger; but we must hope that they will be firm, and that when we again meet, we shall find that both our prayers have been answered.

"Dear E—, I have digressed from my general lively tone in this letter, but I have spoken of that which is uppermost in my thoughts; and, as I am writing to you as a friend, I have put my feelings instead of telling you the news. I shall also value your correspondence much more, dearest E—, if you would open your heart to me as you did at Teignmouth: it would be useful to us both, as at any rate we might [grieve] for one another's faults, if we could not give consolation or advice. But, my dearest E—, do not be offended at this letter from

one so much younger than yourself; but receive it as it was meant—in kindness. * * *

"Ever your very affectionate cousin,
"M. H. M. BROWNLOW."

Melise was at school in London from the spring of 1850 until the summer of 1851, and, as may be conceived, found the separation from home very painful. She writes to her mother: "I do not mind the restraint, but I wish we did not do so much on Sunday, but had more time to read our Bibles and to think;—the only time I have for the latter is when I lie awake in bed in the morning for about an hour before we get up." The bell rang for them to rise at twenty minutes past six, A.M.

It was during the summer of 1850 that she was confirmed, and received her first Communion in the Church where she had been baptized, and where she now rests. She was prepared at school, though confirmed at home; and from the letters she wrote to her parents on the subject, it is plain that it was an occasion for devoting herself afresh to the service of GOD.

One of her schoolfellows with whom she contracted a true friendship, unbroken even now, and who has kindly allowed the insertion of the most valuable letters in this memoir, writes thus to my mother: "I thought of her so much in reading the second lesson the other day, 'Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, &c.' I

thought dear Melise so answered that description ; her childlike trust and confidence, her simplicity, her utter unselfishness were so conspicuous." "I must speak of myself, that you may rejoice more about her. I was so contrary to all that she was. I did not know what humility was till she taught me. I thank God for her friendship, as for one of the greatest blessings of my life." "I hardly know any in whom I have seen the image of CHRIST, as I did in your darling."

I used to wonder at the little pleasure Melise appeared to take in any public amusements which were then so attractive to me. She seemed to care more for the children in her class than for any exciting pleasure. She never made much progress in music, though she tried to cultivate it to please others ; and my father tells me he used constantly to hear her chanting the Psalms and the Hymns of the Church at night in her room over his head ; but she loved to sing by herself to God far better than to perform even before us, when she was always nervous. She made considerable progress in drawing, but latterly often lamented that it seemed so useless, as she could not devote her talents in that art to God. She was very fond of astronomy and natural history, especially of entomology and botany, and never seemed at a loss how to spend her time. She was very reserved, and her voice would falter directly she began to speak on sacred things ; so that her letters speak better than her words.

It pleased God that in 1852 Melise should be

visited by a very severe illness, which we all feared would prove fatal. Most of the time she lay in a kind of dream ; conscious, and yet without control over herself, for the disease attacked her brain ; and when it was proposed to give her the Holy Communion, she felt quite shocked—she seemed to herself to have behaved in such a wilful, trifling manner during her illness. Poor child ! she once or twice was conscious of her danger, and then she found the thought of death very sweet. But it pleased God to restore her to us for a season ; and she has since expressed her thankfulness that she was allowed a longer space to prepare for eternity. I can never be sufficiently grateful ; for had she died then, I should never have known my sister as she really was and is. The first letter I received which gave me any insight into her real life was in answer to one I had written to her on the death of a young friend of hers in the spring of 1853 : I was then preparing for Holy Orders :

"Wilmslow Rectory, Feb. 12, 1853.

" My dearest William,

" Your letter this morning was such a comfort to me. I had long deplored the reserve that existed between us, in things the most important to mortals like ourselves ; and I feel so thankful that you begin more to feel the awful responsibility of a Clergyman who has the cure of souls committed to his charge. Poor A—— ! who would have thought three years ago of her being so soon separated from us ? and who knows who may be taken next ? I often think I shall not long remain here,

for though GOD has been pleased to spare me this time, and once more renewed my health and strength, yet I seem to have had so many warnings, as if to show me the necessity of preparing at once for that day which cometh as a thief in the night.

"Forgive my saying so much, dear William; but I have thought so much upon the subject since my illness, and especially since I have been alone, that when you gave me the opportunity, I could not help opening my heart." * * *

On the same subject, to Miss E. W.—.

"Wilmslow Rectory, Feb. 19, 1853.

"My dear E—,

"* * * You mention poor A—'s death: poor she cannot now be called! Is it not an awful warning to us, so nearly her own age? Are we prepared as she was to enter into life, or are we *not*? This is an awful question, dearest E—, but we know not how soon our turn may come. How knowest thou, but what *this night* thy soul may be required of thee? And can we under such an uncertainty look forward with confidence to three *months* hence? Is it not presumption? How do I know whether I may be alive then? and if I am, how *many* things may intervene to frustrate our plans! How can we, who know not even what *to-day* may bring forth, say at such a time, I will do this or that? * * * I cannot bear, dear E—, to hear you speak of future events with the confidence you do; it pained me very much when you were here, though I had not the courage to speak seriously at the time. But these awful warnings ought to teach us that sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, without laying up disappointment and vexation for a future

time ; for what is disappointment but discontent, generally speaking—and is not that sin ?

“ * * * It must be very, *very* sad to watch poor M. A—,¹ but deeply interesting, for we must all follow the same path, all go through the same dark valley ; but which gate do we mean to enter at the other side ?

“ Mamma has gone to the little Chorley Church to-day. I was afraid to venture, for most people say it is so bitterly cold and draughty, so I must wait till the weather gets warmer ; but I much regret it, for it would have been a great privilege to be able to worship in the House of God twice a week. I envy William, who has daily prayers ; but I fear I do not profit as I ought by the advantages I already have, so it is not likely I shall have more given me.”

Although Melise had been thus early made to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, she was far from having attained to anything like the perfection of the Christian character. The following portion of a letter written to the same cousin reveals what never appeared outwardly, viz., that the pleasures of the world entered into at first from the wish to please others, had come to occupy far too considerable a place in her heart to be consistent with its entire consecration to God. We are told that “ if any man love the world, the love of the FATHER is not in him ;” and it will doubtless appear to some, that what has been said in the

¹ The young lady referred to in this letter, though daily expecting death at the same time that we were watching round my sister's bed, yet survived her about six weeks.

preceding pages of the inner life of this child of God could not be real, or there would have been no enjoyment for her in mere worldly amusements. On the other hand, it may be thought by others to whom these things are still delightful, and who yet persuade themselves that they are harmless, that here is an evident instance of one mixing and even taking pleasure in them while her heart was really above them ; and such may be tempted to rest satisfied with their present state. It will however be seen by those who will take the pains to examine, that when her eyes were afterwards more fully opened to the doctrine of CHRIST crucified, and when she heard the voice of the Good Shepherd, saying, "Follow Me," she saw at once the inconsistency of loving the world, which still hates Him, and longed to withdraw entirely from contact with it. At this time also she was, through natural reserve and humility, averse to supposing that she possessed any gifts of grace which were not bestowed on all ; and consequently was encouraged to do things which probably her conscience secretly reproached her with, by the example of others whom she considered her equals, if not superiors, in holiness.

I would gladly have omitted this letter ; but as I am writing the life of a real and not an ideal person, truth requires that the imperfections as well as the graces of her character should be fairly brought forward. It is not for nothing that Holy Scripture is so full of the sins and failings of good

men ; and the lives of the saints bear witness to the same frailty of human nature. No one who remembers the frivolity of S. Theressa, which she was afterwards so astonished at at God's mercy in bearing with, at the very time when she was receiving the most striking spiritual manifestations of Jesus, will be surprised at finding the same apparent inconsistency in the history of one whose inner life appears to me to resemble in many respects, although of course at a great distance, the experience of that highly favoured Saint. When we bear in mind that all the good there is in any of God's saints is from Him, and all that is of their own is only evil ; their very sins and imperfections only exhibit to us in greater power, the super-abounding Love of the Good Shepherd, Who leads His sheep not only out of the world, but even out of themselves. The great lesson to be drawn from seeing that they were of like passions with ourselves is, that we should not rest in our present state and excuse ourselves by their faults ; but, when we see how they have been drawn even from such an imperfect state to what God's grace has made them, it ought to show us that we are never to "sleep in despair and say *I cannot.*"

To Miss E. W.—.

"Dec. 23, 1853.

"* * * I have come to the conclusion that you envy me my balls ! or else I am sure you would not scold me so unmercifully for enjoying them ! If you had given me a good lecture on *love*, it would have been less

than I deserved. The pomps and vanities of the ball-room are the last things that attract me; I enjoy it merely as I do a ride: my partner is my *horse*, if he *goes well*, I enjoy myself accordingly. * * * I see no more danger in my learning to love the world by going to balls, than for you in taking your country walks with the C—s; it is the *people* in the world that there is a danger of my making idols of; but at the same time there are temptations for most people that would be very prejudicial. * * * Is it not a nuisance having Christmas Day on a Sunday? May I wish you a merry one? I shall at all events be in the right box if I wish you a very happy new year; and I hope you will like the Church Service which I will send by the same post, with the leaf turned down where you are to read; I hope you will find it useful to read to some of your poor people. I don't like to go about without papa's sanction, and though I have asked him several times, he never gives me anything to do.

"Do you know I could almost envy your little friend Gracie,—

"The less of this *cold* world the more of heaven;
The briefer life the earlier immortality."

If only JESUS would receive me as one of *His*, how joyfully would I this moment yield up my life to Him. Death to me has *nothing* gloomy in its aspect; to the Christian it is but the bright entrance into a still brighter *home*. I cannot tell you how last spring I *longed* to die. I was very happy here; I do not think I murmured at having to remain: but if God had seen fit to call me to Himself, how *thankfully* would I have obeyed. I never did wish to be old, I don't see what there is here worth living for, except to do our FATHER's Will; and how

much easier will it be to do it there, when He sees fit to call us to our rest ! I know I am most unfit to die, but I *cannot* dread it; I used to shudder at the thoughts of it, and at the idea of the Judgment ; but since this time last year, when as it were death and I met face to face, I look upon him as a friend whom I long to meet again. Last spring I dreamed a dream—I could not tell you half its awfulness,—it was the Last Day ; I saw the angels descending while the sun shone bright and all things went on the same : then, as they got more distinct, I heard the trumpet sound, heaven and earth passed away, and dead and living stood before the throne of the eternal Judge. I can see it all now, it was not like a dream. I prayed, and thought of my sins, but yet was not afraid. The sentence was passed, and I awoke almost to murmur at finding myself once more in this vain world. E——, though Death and Judgment have no terrors for me, I do tremble when I think how calmly I can look upon them ; for when I remember how sinful I am, and how unmindful of GOD, it seems as though He must have permitted my heart to be quite hardened. I feel as if I *ought* to fear, as if I had no right to trust in Him and to feel safe ; for oh ! how awful to be undeceived at the last moment !

“ Adieu, dearest E—— ; pray for me as I will pray for you, that whenever He shall call, we may be prepared to obey, and meet again in heaven.”

CHAPTER II.

LETTERS TO HER BROTHER—EFFECTS OF A MORE DISTINCT PERCEPTION OF THE GOODNESS OF GOD TOWARDS HER—ANXIETY FOR THE WELFARE OF OTHERS—GREATER STRICTNESS IN HER OWN LIFE—CORRESPONDENCE.

“ I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine.”

“ The Lord is my Shepherd : therefore can I lack nothing.”

THE following letters require some explanation, and oblige me to say more of myself than is perhaps desirable; but the circumstances with which they are connected had, by God's gracious overruling, much to do with my sister's subsequent rapid progress in holiness, and therefore I must ask the reader's kind indulgence while I say a few words relating to myself.

After I had been about six months a deacon, it pleased God of His infinite mercy to show me that it was vain for me to expect to bring others to Him, until I had myself been made to realize my own lost state, and had fled for refuge to that blessed SAVIOUR Who “is come to seek and to

save that which was *lost.*" Not that I ever doubted for a moment my need of CHRIST, or His power and willingness to save me; but it appeared to me that a deeper work of repentance must be wrought in me before I could venture to claim as mine the benefits He had purchased for me on the Cross. I could not believe that *now* was the accepted time, and that my miserable condition was the very ground on which I might plead the favour of Him Who *receiveth sinners*. A "Letter on the Necessity of Conversion," giving the experience of a brother clergyman who had been delivered from uncertainties similar to those which perplexed me, was by GOD's blessing of great service to me, in helping me to see that peace with GOD through faith in JESUS CHRIST was attainable; and also that the Fathers of the Church had always taught what my heart told me was necessary for me, but which I had ignorantly conceived to be inconsistent with the teaching of the Church. Still, for a long time my irresolute will refused to accept of what my reason was convinced GOD was perfectly willing to give me; and when my sister wrote to me for advice on the subject, I felt quite incompetent to answer her questions. A lurking doubt that perhaps after all I might be deceived, made me shrink from plunging any one else into the misery that I was in myself, until from my own experience I could show them the way of deliverance; and this will account for the strange expressions Melise refers to in the second of these letters.

In the first one she was misled by the 'Evangelical' misuse of the word Assurance, which she supposed implied assurance of final salvation.

"*Wilmslow Rectory, Sept. 10th, 1854.*

"My dearest William,

" You seem very uncertain whether to come home or not; I hope you will come and spend a parson's week with us; I want to see you very much, and to talk to you, if I dare, about this 'Letter'; they let me read that, but not your letters on the subject. It has disturbed my mind very much. If it is true, I am in darkness and sinful ignorance; and if it so deeply concerns you and your salvation, it must equally concern me. It is not as in worldly things, 'Where ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise;' but in religious matters we are told that ignorance is sin. But still I can hardly believe that such bliss is often allowed to Christians in this 'vale of tears,' and am half afraid we may be seeking after a delusion. You have had time and opportunity deeply to consider this. Do not laugh at my foolishness; but, if you do really feel it of such vital importance, come home, and try to enlighten your loving sister,

" M. H. M. BROWNLOW."

I replied to this by as clear a statement as I could give of the necessity of a personal knowledge of GOD through JESUS CHRIST: at the same time, I shrank from supposing that one so pure and innocent as my sister had always appeared to me, could need the same entire change of heart that I felt was necessary for myself; and therefore wished her, if her uneasiness were only a temporary mis-

giving, to put the question aside. Her answer showed me very distinctly that she had long ago been taught by the HOLY SPIRIT that JESUS is the LORD, and was far more qualified to instruct than to learn from me; at the same time she very justly censured my unfaithfulness in wishing her to put away the subject, instead of sifting carefully the foundations on which her hopes were built. Tender consciences may often be alarmed and made sad when they have no real cause for sadness; but this sadness will always be more than made up for by the increased confidence they will have when they find that their Foundation does not fail them, but stands firm in spite of all their fears. It is the more necessary to make this remark, from the difficulty people of the higher and middle class so often experience in finding or communicating with a spiritual guide. They are consequently left to judge for themselves of their own state; and, by writing bitter things against themselves, too often allow Satan to cast them into a state of morbid melancholy, which unfits them for the active glorifying of God in their bodies and in their spirits which are His.

"Wilmslow, October 18th,
"S. Luke's Day, 1854.

"My dear William,

"I have been reading your letter to papa this morning, and am very glad indeed that I did read it before I answered yours, for I hope I begin to understand you now; and if that letter contains a true statement of

your feelings, I am indeed thankful, dear William, for so far I cannot but believe you are right, and I shall and do pray with a joyful hope that GOD will give you peace and comfort. Far be it from me to doubt that Peace is given, even on this earth, to all who go for it. Miserable indeed would have been my life if I had not found it. Can you think, dear William, that I could have stood calmly on the brink of the grave, if I had not felt that CHRIST was sufficient for me? But while I am still so sinful and weak that I fall every hour, every moment, I cannot, dare not believe that I am certain to be saved as the Wesleyans [query Calvinists?] do; and I trembled lest you were seeking such a delusion. To some who are at the point to die, doubtless such a certainty is given; but even S. Paul tells us more than once in the course of his preaching that it was not impossible for him to be a castaway; and shall we presume upon that favour of a merciful GOD? But to know and *feel* His love to us is joy unspeakable; but how does it humble us on account of our sins and ingratitude; the more we realize such exceeding love, the more shall we detest and abhor ourselves for so continually grieving such a loving FATHER! * * * Real repentance must be and is lasting; such miserable wretches as we are cannot hope to have done with it in this life; we must do as David did, 'Go mourning all our days;' for though GOD has blotted out our sins, they must not be forgotten by us.

"Still His service is a joyful one, and until we find a joy in glorifying Him both by our words and actions we are not fit for heaven; for if our time there is to be spent in praising Him, and that gives us no pleasure, heaven, if we *were* there, would be no heaven to us.

"And now, my dear William, a few words in answer to your letter to me. You say 'you thought I was really

anxious about it,' but that 'if I am not, of course it is of no consequence.' What do you mean? That my salvation is of no consequence? or that I can be saved without conversion? I hope I am converted, for I *do* feel that CHRIST has suffered *all* for me, and the consciousness prompts me to use every endeavour to glorify Him by my life and conversation; though, alas! it is little I do, and my hateful reserve prevents me from doing much that I might. But oh, dearest William, do let us be one in CHRIST, and speak freely to each other about what concerns eternity.

"Ever your affectionate sister,
"M. H. M. BROWNLLOW."

I sent her the Life of the Rev. R. A. Suckling, to explain better what I meant. In her reply she says:—

" * * * But last night I was taking more particular notice of those parts which described his peace of mind, as it was in illustration of that you sent it me. He certainly did enjoy it; but it seems to have come to him very gradually, without his seeking or even noticing it at first; differing there from Henry Martyn who prayed earnestly for it, and obtained it in direct answer to his prayers. It was reading his Life that first made me seek the sense of pardon. Before, my soul was always restlessly inquiring, 'What must I do to be saved?' How I then longed to ask some one; but there was no one to whom I dared to apply! I remember once saying how much I wished there was some Clergyman I could ask, but only got well laughed at. Clergymen would do much more good if they could gain the confidence of the young,

before reserve becomes a habit. I have been much left to myself, and doubtless it was ordered for the best by our loving FATHER; but the soul longs for sympathy. Will you not let me confide in you, dear William? May we not, through His Grace, be the means of helping each other on towards heaven? We are both most deeply interested in the same object. I long to hear from you again."

As my mind was still very much troubled, and I was leaving my Curacy, I contemplated retiring for a time from ministerial work, until, having been myself taught of God, I should be qualified really to teach others. This made my family naturally uneasy about me, and my sister wrote to me on the subject:

" My dearest William,

" * * * It is the hardest part of all, to give up our wills to Him, and to say with sincerity, ' Thy will be done,' when we have been asking with our whole souls for something we want,—something perhaps on which we feel our very salvation depends.

" William, dearest William, will you pardon your foolish little sister if she ventures to question your present intentions? I am most incompetent to advise you; but I have prayed that, if I am about to say what is not strictly in accordance with His Will, it may have no weight with you, and so I venture. To retire now, even for a short time, from the ministry, is it not, after having put your hand to the plough, looking back? I felt it would be in my case, when I felt I could not teach in the Sunday School as I ought, and dreaded lest the curse of those who offend one of CHRIST's little ones should fall upon

me; so with fear and trembling I continued praying more and more earnestly that GOD would obliterate the evil I taught them from their hearts, but water the good. And He has been with me, and given me to feel I was doing right. I speak of myself only, because I can better understand what I have felt myself, and so better explain what I mean.

"I wish you could lay your burden at the foot of the Cross, for CHRIST's yoke is easy, and His burden light, casting *all* your cares upon Him, for He careth for you. Is it not disparaging His Atonement, if we doubt His power or His willingness both to forgive us all our sins, and to prevent us from doing harm, if we ask Him; nay, if we doubt His power of working good even through us who are so utterly incapable of doing any good things of ourselves?

"You have 'taken authority to execute the Office of a Deacon in the Church,' and have solemnly promised to perform the duties appertaining thereunto with GOD's help. Can you believe that He will bless your giving up those duties, breaking those promises, to the comfort of your soul? O William, do not act without striving to give up every wish and will of your own, and asking Him to guide you. And is it not then your duty to submit to those whom He has placed over you?

"With many prayers believe me, dear William,

"Ever your loving sister,

"M. H. M. B."

Again,

"Nov. 4th, 1854.

"* * * You have been called to the ministry, and must minister of what you have received, not wait till you have received more. I feel very happy now when I

think of you, dear William, which I have never done thoroughly before; but now GOD has begun the good work in you, He will accomplish it even to the end. And yet I half dread to see you, for fear our old reserve shall rise up in its old place as a barrier between us, and then it will be worse than ever. Why should this be? surely it is not right. Is it our pride which is not yet humbled? or are we ashamed of the Faith which we profess?"

To Miss E. W.—.

"Oct. 25, 1854.

"My dearest E.—,

"It is indeed much to be lamented that even really true friends so seldom talk upon what will be the never-ending topic of eternity; does it not show how depraved our hearts are? for 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,' so if our hearts did abound in holy thoughts, surely our words would be holy too? but when only just now and then our thoughts turn upon religion we are ashamed to confess them.

"I should like to know your friend S—, though I am afraid I should not quite like to hear her talk if she is fond of disputation, although they must be till the Kingdom of CHRIST comes on earth; still I would rather trust to those wiser than myself to reason upon such things, and then I will choose those opinions which from their reasonings come with most authority to my mind; but I cannot bear to hear parties abuse each other because neither of their minds are sufficiently clear to discern the exact truth. Let us seek after Christian Charity, dearest E.—, and then we shall love all, because CHRIST *died for all*; and let us not judge others, lest we ourselves be judged according to our own measure.

" * * * I think in [R. C——'s] Letter, he under-
rates the number of those who have been brought to a
saving belief in JESUS; but should not those who have
such faith speak out more boldly that they may bring
others to the same? and surely, dearest E——, we how-
ever young, are told to try well our faith, to see what
foundation we are building our hopes upon, and be cer-
tain we are *quite right* there, before we venture to enter-
tain one hope of heaven. On minor points we may
safely give way to experience, but not on any fundamental
ones, as we are not sure we shall live to gain experience;
we may die to-night, or before the evening closes in,—
then, where is our hope?

" I trust dear William is only seeking what he ought,
and what I pray he may find,—peace and confidence in
his SAVIOUR, which all must have who *really* believe in
Him. All who profess to be Christians profess to be-
lieve in Him, but they do not all *realize* it, they do not
believe in Him to the salvation of their souls. And
William will not rest till he *feels* CHRIST has died for
him, and borne the punishment of *his* sins upon the Cross.
I cannot tell you how thankful I am that his conscience
is at length truly awakened, and though the awakening
leads him through bitter repentance, he will receive peace
at last, and then happiness. * * *

To the same.

" Nov. 21, 1854.

" My dearest E——,

" Many thanks for your kind letter; it is very
comforting to find one who can thoroughly sympathize
with me, and I could pour out my whole heart to you,
but I do not think it would be quite right where others

are concerned. Trouble and sorrow seem gathering round me, and seem for the time almost to obscure the brightness beyond. Oh! that I had wings like a dove, that I might flee away and be at rest; but if we are not tried, how can we ever be made like unto the 'Man of sorrows,' or be purified from this world's dross? I feel as though I could bear trial cheerfully and willingly if it afflicted myself, but when those suffer who are most dear to me—our affection makes it hard to say, 'Thy will be done.' How hard it is to give up our whole wills to God!

"What a pleasure it must have been to have met your old pastor! I wonder you had courage to address him, but I do think you were quite right. He had been the pipe through which God's grace had flowed to you, and you owed him therefore a large debt of gratitude. I do not remember who first awoke my mind to the light of the gospel, but I have often wished I could speak to [clergymen] after a sermon that moved my feelings, I longed to know what I could do to work out my own salvation.

"Do you know when I read of our soldiers at Sebastopol, instead of thinking 'poor fellows,' I am more inclined to envy them, where the path of duty leads them to almost certain death, [with] often the feeling that the next shot may place them for ever beyond the toil and tumult of this vain world. But I am very impatient, am I not, dearest E——? pray for me that patience may be given me to do my duty in the situation in which I am placed; for, as we were told on Sunday, we may be living in heaven while here on earth, if our heart and conversation are already there. * * *

"P.S. Remember my feelings are only for your own ear, dear."

To the same.

"Dec. 2nd, 1854.

"My dearest E——,

"I called upon you to mourn with me in my last letter, so now I hope you will rejoice with me. R—— is coming to us on the 18th, with her husband, to spend a week with us; will not that be delightful? Tuesday fortnight!

"Oh how many blessings are scattered around me! and yet the greatest of them all is the hope of a blissful eternity,—why may I not look forward to it with longing? I long for Tuesday fortnight, when I hope to look into those dear soft black eyes,—why may I not long for the day when I shall see my dearest, best Friend, face to face? My longing for R—— does not make me less, but much more anxious to do all I can to please her; and so the other should, and does, I hope.

"How soon the year slips round! Here is Advent again, and in a few days I shall have completed another year. How little done! how much left undone! and how much done that ought to have been left undone. What changes, too, this short time has made! Are we better, or worse, dear E——? Have our talents gained other talents? or have any or all lain buried? Perhaps Italian may be one that has: we cannot know what use our learning may be put to; our minds are given us to improve as well as everything else; influence is not our only talent. You seem to know so well how useful I could be, dear E——; I wish you would tell me, for I really do not know—as for telling my class stories—I never could interest any child, though I have often tried; I cannot tell stories, but I do sometimes read one."

To the same.

"Dec. 13th, 1854.

"My dearest E——,

"Many thanks for your kind wishes, and for the Sermons, which I am far from thinking a bad birthday present, from their outside. I wish you could see me, dear E——, when you fancy I am looking on the dark side of things; why, with the exception of a dark hour, about once a year, I am as happy as the day is long. This, though a sinful, is a most *lovely* world, and only too loveable; friends here are most kind, and I don't know who has more of them, though they all have their faults. I could not imagine anything better or any body more loveable, had I not been told there is a 'better land,' and a 'Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.' If, then, this world and these friends are so enchanting, what *must* those better ones be? And whether I die or live, I shall see CHRIST come in His glory. Nature has an instinctive dread of death, and so would, of course, rather escape its shades; but, if we be found in CHRIST, I believe it will not make much difference to our feelings whether we are changed from mortal to immortal, or are sown in corruption to be raised in incorruption."

The fact that one so near and dear to her had been growing up by her side all these years, with his heart really alienated from God and CHRIST, awakened in Melise the consciousness that the gift of grace that she had received was not so universal as in her humility she had supposed it to be; and she at once perceived that it was given her not for her own gratification, but as a precious talent, to

be used for the glory of God and the good of others. She accordingly began to endeavour, to the utmost of her power, to win those with whom she associated, to the knowledge of God and of JESUS CHRIST which is eternal life. At the same time, her heart was awakened to the necessity of leading a more strictly religious life; and in her began to be fulfilled now, as it never had before, “My sheep hear My Voice, and I know them, and they *follow Me.*” As was to be expected, the doctrines of the Church, which she had always held implicitly, began now to assume to her a more distinct form; and this increasing definiteness of Faith produced, as it must in a mind led by the SPIRIT of GOD, an increasing strictness of life and practice.

I had written to her about society, and keeping the heart free, while she was amid the distraction of numerous friends in London. She answers :

To her Brother.

[“London, May, 1855.]

“* * * * I like being with them very much, though it is a trial; for *any* change, and being in company with good or bad, always excites my mind a good deal, and calls it away from better things; but that must be overcome, not by living to oneself, but to and among others. Our Blessed SAVIOUR Himself says He would not have us go out of the world, but to keep from the evil. Such being His wish, I know He will be with me to keep me in all my way, and will strengthen me as He sees fit to do His work.”

To the same.

"Witnslow, June 18th and 20th.

* * * "I do not use any devotional book, except Wilberforce on the Sacrament; do you recommend any? I always find it so difficult to offer up other people's prayers, they never exactly suit one's case, except the Church Prayers perhaps.

* * "I am grieved to say that dear —— is offended. Will you, dearest William, join your prayers with mine for her conversion? for is it not promised that if two of us shall agree to ask anything, it shall be granted? and she is so dear to me, I cannot bear the thought of being separated from her sympathy, but I thank GOD her letters have no power to shake me; but I fear lest my zeal has outrun my prudence, and so caused her to draw back. May His HOLY SPIRIT guide me in writing to her. She says I seem to think myself right, and everybody else in total darkness. I must pray for grace to write more humbly, for such an impression must ruin the cause [of truth.]" *

The last extract shows that Melise was now beginning to discover the meaning of our SAVIOUR'S words, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, but a sword." The naturally wicked heart of man is too often not without a severe struggle brought to submit to the Will of GOD, even though that Will may be communicated to it through one who possesses its warmest sympathies and affections. At the same time, good advice is always liable to be marred by the imperfection of the channel through which it is given; and at no time do we stand so much in need of humility and divine charity

as when we are performing that most true yet arduous work of Charity, correcting the faults of others, and showing them the things that make for their real and lasting peace.

To Miss E. W.—.

"March 12th, 1855.

" My dearest E—,

" * * * I am amused at your thinking me like Theodora, to myself I seem so *very* unlike; I cannot sympathize with her at all. I often can with Violet, where she seems most weak—it is weakness and cowardice, not the fear of being thought weak, that often makes me hide good feeling; my deepest feelings are told freely to the only one who knows how to sympathize with me—the only one who, instinct teaches me, really understands me. Don't you know that feeling which tells you how far you may open your heart to another? It requires a strong inward battle, and much force to make yourself reveal more of yourself. I do not think it is right to allow yourself to be so little understood in your own family as I do; but you do not know how hard a struggle it is to bring out any cherished idea that is unknown to others. My heart beats, and the blood rushes to my face, and sometimes I feel all on a tremble, so that I can hardly pronounce the words,—just as I might feel if I had to go alone into some great apparent danger. I have no moral courage, though a fair share of physical.

* * "If you approve of the Psalms being sung, many of which form the most penitential, affecting prayers, what possible objection can you have for prayers of our own making being sung too? I found an idea I liked

much the other day—it gave as a reason for saying the Prayers on one note ‘that there may be no discord in prayer.’ Have not your thoughts often been led astray by some one near you repeating them in a peculiar voice, with very marked emphasis? and when you have gone into a strange church, have they not seemed quite different? and you have been inclined to judge the Reader from his intonation in reading.”

To the same.

“ April 16th, 1855.

“ * * * It is the exclusiveness of Mr. ——’s views that I cannot agree with. ‘The LORD knoweth them that are His;’ but He does not tell us we shall, except by Love. ‘Hereby shall [all] men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have *love* one towards another;’ but they seem to own no one as a brother, who cannot say, ‘My sins are forgiven.’ ”

To her Brother.

“ Wilmslow, July 3rd, 1855.

“ My dearest William,

“ I had quite forgotten your birthday was so near, so I have nothing to send you but my best wishes, and some glad tidings. * * * I am so glad we are likely to see you so soon again, I trust we may find you looking more peaceful and happy, for are not the fruits of the SPIRIT *joy* and *peace*? I have the ‘Imitation of CHRIST,’ and have read a great deal of it; but I feel it is far above me, often above what I even wish to attain to; he seems to think so much about himself, and not to care for others; I long to learn how to help those whom I see in ignorance of the things that make to their peace.” * * *

It will be seen from subsequent letters what an entire change in her views of the interior life the HOLY SPIRIT was graciously pleased to effect in her heart, while her zeal in external work for GOD did not diminish in the least degree. Even at this time she valued greatly the Offices and Sacraments of the Church, though much of their hidden treasure was unknown to her, as appears from the following extract :

To the same.

"Bournemouth, Hants,

"S. James' Day, July 25, 1855.

" * * * I suppose mamma told you that we have daily service here morning and evening, and the Holy Communion at eight every Sunday, and at twelve on Holy Days. It is a great blessing, for it seems to recall one's thoughts from mere self-amusement, [which one is] too apt to fall into when there are no duties to perform.
* * * That is a beautiful little book you gave me,¹ I read it every day; but I am never at home at twelve o'clock to join in praying for your Church, still I suppose another time will be better than not at all." * * *

The next extract shows what an effort it was to her to risk losing the affection of one of her friends whom she had offended by plain speaking :

" * * * Oh pray for me, dear William. I do so fear lest a wish to regain her love should lead me to hide

¹ The *Valley of Lilies*, by Thomas à Kempis. I had also sent her a prayer for the Church of S. Bartholomew's, Moor Lane, to which I was then attached, which we used daily at twelve o'clock, in intercession for one another.

the truth ; yet she then could never love me properly, nor could I be happy. But oh ! I am such a coward, God have mercy upon me !”

*To Mrs. F. V. M——, formerly Miss E. W——, soon
after her marriage.*

“ Nov. 25, 1855.

“ Thank you, dearest E——, for your nice kind letter, it really did me good. Oh I wish we were more earnest, more sincere in our renunciation of the world, more faithful to our promises of loving Him above all things ! * * * Your Cross must be, dear E——, to keep your heart free and fixed on GOD in the midst of all these enticing joys. The conquest of self is by far the fiercest battle, and most so where in the midst of prosperity and happiness ; for it is much easier to serve GOD with the whole heart when there is nothing to entice it here, but it is much more acceptable to Him when torn away from all [that is] dear in this world by its own effort instead of His afflictions. I always find happiness and prosperity a much greater trial than misfortune and grief.”

Speaking of a party of young ladies travelling abroad together :

“ If they carry out their scheme, I daresay they will have great fun, but I don’t think it will do them good. If I could travel in such an independent way, I should visit the Sisterhoods, and try and learn something as Miss Nightingale did. But I want to work for GOD, not seek my own pleasure. I wish I might give up society altogether; it distracts my mind, and costs so much ; and is it not conforming to the world ? I have not zeal or

courage to try to do any good in it, else it might be right.

"I hope you have begun to visit your *poor* people; I should have thought they had the *first* claim on a clergyman's wife. GOD bless you, dear.

"Ever your own,
"MELISE."

CHAPTER III.

COMMENCEMENT OF HER ILLNESS, 1855—REMOVAL TO TORQUAY—LETTERS TO A FRIEND ON RELIGION—PARTIAL RECOVERY—CORRESPONDENCE—CHANGE IN ESTIMATION OF AMUSEMENT, ETC.

“ My sheep hear My Voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”

“ He shall feed me in a green pasture; and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.”

“ He shall convert my soul: and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for His Name’s sake.”

MELISE had never been otherwise than delicate from her earliest years. She had great difficulty in recovering from the ordinary diseases of childhood, and throughout her life was constantly liable to take cold, and when this was the case her recovery was often very tedious. The severe illness she had in 1852, though it seemed at first to clear her constitution, left behind, especially in her back, traces of the shock it had given to her whole system. She was not well in the summer of 1855 at Bournemouth, and on her return to Wilmslow, attention

was called to her health from her being unable for a time to stand or walk upright. Shrinking from giving her parents pain and anxiety, led her to conceal or make light of illness as long as she was able, but she has since acknowledged that she felt certain that this weakness was the precursor of the illness that would carry her to the grave. At first it merely prevented her taking her favourite exercise of riding, and this not until the end of October. It was thought that with great care she might be able to remain at home during the winter, but towards the beginning of 1856, her cough increased suddenly without any apparent cause, and the state of her lungs was such that her medical adviser thought it dangerous for her to encounter the March winds in the North of England. Accordingly, about the middle of February, my mother took her down to Torquay, whither I accompanied them for a time.

The following account of the way in which Melise usually spent the day about this time, given by a friend, who spent a few days with her before her removal to Torquay, may be interesting to the reader. Her friend writes : "During my visit to Wilmslow, last January year, my mornings till dinner timewere passed usually with Melise in her room, so that I knew and saw what her occupations at that time chiefly were, though no doubt my visit rather interrupted her usual routine. The books she was regularly using lay on her little table by the sofa, and I believe she had an appointed time for reading each.

Her Bible, with marks in the places she was reading, Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of CHRIST*, Milner's *Church History*, and S. Augustine's *Confessions*,—all which, I believe, she was reading regularly through. She also frequently turned to some favourite passage from another little book by Thomas à Kempis, called 'The Valley of Lilies,' of which she was particularly fond, or read aloud to me one of the hymns she liked best in 'Select Hymns for Missions, &c.' The two I most distinctly remember her reading were, Hymn 20, which she also had in a different metre,¹ and the last one beginning, 'I was wandering and weary;' she seemed especially to enter into the last hymn, reading it with the greatest feeling, and having an evident difficulty in controlling her voice sufficiently to read it steadily to the end,—a very unusual thing in her. I forget what other books she was reading at that time, but I know that there were several other religious books on her table. She told me that she read them very slowly, not being anxious to finish them, but to gain subjects for prayer and meditation from them, and that her plan was to read only a very few pages at a time, turning it into prayer if possible as she went on, and then to lay aside the book, and think over what she had read, and what she had learnt from it. Of course she did not give much time to reading while we were together, but she told me what her plans were when she was alone. After lunch, we usually

¹ Given page 45.

took a walk;—when alone, she frequently visited the poor people at that time,—she seemed to think it the greatest privilege to be allowed to do any work for GOD. When she came in, she was always obliged to spend the rest of the afternoon on the sofa, lying in a very uncomfortable position, without even a pillow for her head, and yet she always managed to employ herself till it was too dark to see. Her first occupation was to chant the Psalms for the day all through in a low voice, enjoying particularly the Psalms of praise, which seemed peculiarly suited to express her joy and thankfulness in everything. Afterwards, she often wrote letters, still lying down; and when it grew dusk, instead of lighting the candles, I came to sit by her, and we generally had long and very interesting conversations on serious subjects till the dressing hour obliged us to separate. I wish I could remember any of her remarks, they were so original and earnest, and she seemed to feel the truth of everything she said so thoroughly *for herself*. I think the absence of human teaching helped to make her what she was. Her love to CHRIST, and her extreme earnestness in His service, seemed to me the most prominent features in her religious life, as her strength of mind, and independence were in her natural character."

A former schoolfellow of my sister's, at a considerable sacrifice of her own feelings, which she felt ought not to be preferred to the glory of GOD and the benefit of others, has kindly furnished me

with a packet of letters received from her, commencing on her arrival at Torquay. She writes to her so much more freely than she was ever able to do to myself, that the light of divine Grace shines out through these letters with less obstruction than in any of her former correspondence. The later ones display a maturity of Christian experience which I, even after witnessing Melise's blessed end, was quite unprepared for; in fact, it was the reading of this correspondence that made me change my original plan of merely giving a short sketch as an appendix to the sermon; for it struck me very forcibly that many, especially of her own sex, might find comfort and instruction from them, and would be glad to turn from the hot contentions which so devour, and rend, and dissipate what is strangely called the "religious world," to the still waters beside which the Good Shepherd was leading this favoured one of His own lambs, and which appear to have become more and more deep and still, as they followed her down into the dark valley of the shadow of death.

This correspondence commences immediately on her arrival at Torquay.

To Miss L— —.

"Torquay, Feb. 27th, 1855.

"My dearest L— —,

"Here we arrived last night, though not at these lodgings; we stopped the first night at the hotel.* * * "Tell me a little more about yourself when you write.

— comforted me concerning you, else your letters seemed as if you cared less than you used to do for heavenly things. I feared you were absorbed in earthly grief; but, GOD be praised, it is not so. Only do not hide your true self from me in future, dear L—. Tell me all you are doing. It will be very hard to keep from sinking into self-indulgence here, where all do what they can to pet and spoil me; and there seems no work to rouse one. GOD knows what He brought me here for. May I find out, and do His Will. Pray, dearest L—, for your very affectionate friend,

"MELISE."

To the same.

"My dearest L—,

"I feel it a very difficult task to answer your letter, but I pray to 'Our FATHER' to help me; for I feel that *all* my words have *some* effect either for good or evil—and how unworthy and incapable am I to write on such a subject to you. But, dearest L—, until we utterly detest ourselves, we *cannot* lay hold of the precious pardon bought for *you* and for *me* on Calvary. How hard it is though thoroughly to detest oneself; you do not quite do it yet, dear L—: self-esteem is not quite crushed when you say you 'could not bear reproof from *any one*.' I have no right to reprove you from being better myself; but it is our duty to assist one another [in] every way we can, and you asked me to tell you your faults, and this is one that will take many and bitter trials to conquer. You must help me too, dear L—, and not flatter me as you have always done. It is very pleasing to human nature to be loved and respected; but CHRIST says, 'Blessed are ye when men shall revile you,' and 'Woe,—when they shall speak well of you.'

Their love ought only to be pleasing to us as far as they love us for His sake, 'for we have *nothing* good in ourselves to be loved.'¹ * * *

"Do write freely, and tell me all you think and feel and do. GOD knows how thankful I should be if permitted to be of the slightest use to you, or to receive any lesson from you. Our faults perhaps are different, and our virtues too; we must emulate each other's virtues, and help each [one the] other to conquer her faults, so shall we be 'bearing one another's burdens, and so fulfilling the law of CHRIST.' But if we are to help each other, we must begin by praying for each other.

"You ask me to tell you what I think of you now. I can't do that,—I have seen nothing of you for three years and more, you must tell me of yourself. I see you are in earnest, may you ever keep so!

"I have not set you a good example by speaking. Reserve is one of my greatest faults, it constantly hinders my receiving good or doing good. But CHRIST has been very merciful to me, in leading me on gradually, thanks be to Him for it! I never knew what happiness was till I knew Him: and oh, dearest L——, if you are but at

¹ S. Paul confesses, "In me, that is in my *flesh*, dwelleth no good thing;" and yet he elsewhere says, "They glorified God in me." All for whom CHRIST died are to be loved for *His* sake; but a Christian, being a member of CHRIST (Eph. v. 30), is made partaker of the Divine nature, and therefore has something good in him (though not in his *flesh*) which is worthy of love. Love to all the Saints is everywhere in the New Testament pointed out as a peculiar characteristic of the Christian; and God Himself is revealed to us as loving the faithful and obedient disciple of JESUS (see S. John xiv. 21, 23,) with quite a different Love from that with which He *so* loved a lost world as to give His only Begotten Son to die for its Redemption.

peace with Him, the darkest trials will not ruffle your joy. Tell me what you are doing ! for *do* we must, if our Faith is alive, and if not it won't help us. We must not sit still and do nothing ; we must draw closer and closer to Him, or He will withdraw from us. Oh I dread being idle here, and going back. Pray, dearest L——, for your very loving *sister*."

To the same.

"My dearest L——,

"I was so glad to get your letter, I want you so much to tell me all you feel;¹ it is such a help to be able to talk about these things, it brings them into reality so much more. Besides, it is a *duty*. We were told in a sermon on Sunday, that if we really *felt* what GOD had done for *us*, we *could* not—we DARE not hold our tongues; but must show forth His praise to others. You *do* feel what He has done for *you*—thanks be to His Name ! but are you, dearest L——, returning His love with gratitude, by working for His glory in trying to bring others to know Him ? It requires great humility; we cannot tell what He has done for *us* without telling what we were before.

"I long to help you if I can, but I don't quite understand you yet. Repentance is the gift of GOD, and He will give you more if He sees you want it, and are seeking it. We must trust Him for everything. If you can, get Molyneux's Sermons on 'Gethsemane' : they will give you some idea of the *weight* and guilt of our sins when it wrung drops of Blood from our blessed SAVIOUR's brow.

¹ My dear sister's ignorance of the use of technical language led her to use the first word that came to hand. Here and elsewhere "*feelings*" would be more correctly rendered "*state of soul*," which is a very different thing.

If we are ¹[by nature] sinful, there is grace sufficient for us to become righteous, if only we will lay hold of it. Besides, when GOD gives us His HOLY SPIRIT, He gives a new nature, and the sure promise that if we walk in that SPIRIT we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. I don't then see any excuse for sin because we were born evil, when GOD is ever ready to give us a new nature. True, there will always be a war in us, but if He that is for us be stronger than he which is against us, it seems to me quite our own fault if we do evil. But when you feel doubts of this kind, do not try to reason with yourself; but pray, dearest L——, for *Light*, and He will guide you into all truth.

"I do not feel equal to writing any more now, but ever believe me, yours most lovingly,

"MELISE."

The following extracts may serve to show the spirit in which Melise endeavoured to "return GOD's love towards her with gratitude, by working for His glory in trying to bring others to know Him."

To Miss H— —.

"*Torquay, [Feb. 1856.]*

" * * Did you get Leighton that day you went to Manchester, and how do you like it? does it not make you lie down in your bed more peacefully? or do you feel you want that it speaks so much of? Do write freely to me, dearest H——, you cannot write to one who loves you more sincerely; and I want your confidence and sympathy,—to feel that you are indeed a *sister in CHRIST*."

¹ The original was "made sinful," evidently an expression hastily used.

Again to the same, after an invitation to spend a few days with her at Torquay.

Torquay, March 12th.

" * * Is it utterly out of the question ? I am sure it would do you good. And, dear H——, you cannot tell how I long to see you happy. GOD might, in His great mercy, make me the means of showing you the way to Peace ; He has wonderfully guided me, and I should be so very glad to return your kindness to me. *Do come if you can.*"

To the same.

" My dearest H——,

" We shall be delighted to see you ; do come on Saturday if you can. Mr. Y——'s sermons will be more likely to do you good than anything. * * I am so thankful you begin to see brighter things. There is indeed a happiness in religion you will find nowhere else but in Heaven, for the kingdom of GOD is within us if we are really His." * *

Melise was exceedingly fond of a translation by a clergyman of S. Francis Xavier's well known Hymn :—

O Deus ! Ego amo Te :
 Nec amo Te, ut salves me,
 Aut quia non amantis Te
 Æterno punis igne.
 Tu, Tu, mi J̄esu ! totum me
 Amplexus es in cruce :
 Tulisti clavos, lanceam,
 Multamque ignominiam,

Innumeros dolores,
 Sudores, et angores,
 Ac mortem ;—et haec propter me
 Ac pro me peccatore.
 Cur igitur non amem Te,
 O JESU amantissime !
 Non ut in celo salves me,
 Aut ne seternum damnes me,
 Nec præmii ullius spe ;
 Sed sicut Tu amasti me,
 Sic amo, et amabo Te,
 Solum quia Rex meus es,
 Et solum quia Deus es.

She calls it in a letter to an aunt for whom she copied it out, " My favourite hymn;" and she here sends it in a letter to her friend Miss —— L.

" O God ! I love Thee ! not that I¹
 May reign with Thee eternally :
 Nor that I may escape the lot
 Of those, O God ! who love Thee not.
 Thou ! Thou, my JESU ! Thou for me,
 Didst agonize on Calvary ;
 Didst bear the Cross, the shame, the lance,
 The rabble's ignominious glance ;
 Unnumbered griefs ; unmeasured woes ;
 Faintings, and agonizing throes ;
 And death itself ;—and all for me !
 A sinner, and Thine enemy !
 Ah ! shall not then such Love cause me,
 Most loving JESUS, to love Thee ?

¹ Melise, writing from memory, had :—

I love Thee, JESUS, not that I
 and again, in the 6th line :—
 Didst agonize upon the tree.

Not that in heaven I may reign ;
Not to escape eternal pain ;
Nor in the hope of any gain :
But as Thou, JESUS, dost love me,
So do I love, and will love Thee,
Because Thou art my King—my LORD—
Because, O JESUS ! Thou art God.

"I will send you a better copy of this when I get home ; I have not got it here, so could only write from memory. Just think of what He did for us! then, do not our very utmost efforts, for the salvation of any, seem as nothing? and if they don't succeed, think *how many* altogether reject what He has done for them, and yet He loves them, and strives in them still. If we once fully realize what He has done for *us*, I think we must love every body else, never mind how wicked, or how disagreeable ; His Blood was shed for *them*,—that is enough. We shall burn to tell them so, and be unhappy till they feel it—not because *we* are unsuccessful, but because *they* are the losers, and because CHRIST is despised. And if, dear L——, you humbled yourself a whole year before this person, for her good,¹ yet she got none, was not GOD glorified in your humility and perseverance? In doing His work we can never be unsuccessful, because He has promised to be *ever* with us, and that His Word shall *never* return unto Him void ; and JESUS told His disciples that if their words and works did no good to the receivers, yet [they] should to *them* ; and I am sure from experience nothing does one *personally* so much real good, as trying to do good to others,—to bring them to

¹ Here Melise misunderstood something her correspondent had said ; and the passage is only allowed to remain on account of the remarks which follow on the supposed case.

CHRIST, for His glory. And therefore, dear, never fear troubling me with your troubles and difficulties, for it is a real blessing to try to help you, and it makes me feel I have one more real sister in CHRIST."

To the same.

"Begun April 1st.

"My dearest L——,

"Thank you for writing such a nice long letter, and for giving me an additional motive for praising GOD, by showing me His loving ways in leading you more closely to Him. * * It is indeed *Faith* that we want; faith teaches us alone what CHRIST has done for us, and *that* seems to me to teach us everything. S. Paul thought it necessary to know nothing else—JESUS CHRIST—and Him Crucified. If we look constantly to Him, we shall be enabled to crucify self and the world. If it was necessary that *He* should die for us, does it not show we can do *nothing* for ourselves? What have we to do with *pride* who have crucified the LORD of Glory? for it was your sins and mine, dearest L——, that did it.

"* * * * As to being 'teased' with your troubles, are we not 'sisters,' children of *one* FATHER, and shall one be troubled and the others not suffer with them? We are told to bear one another's burthens, but really it gives me *real* pleasure and comfort to see you troubled about these things, and to be allowed to sympathize with you; for 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.'

"Uncle T—— says I must stay here another month, and then pay R—— a visit in Hampshire before I go home. I seem to have been so long away already! But it is

the cross I am called to *take up*, and with His help I will do it willingly. Now I know something of Him, it makes everything so light and easy, I can never praise Him enough.

“Your loving sister in Him,
“MELISE.”

To the same.

“Torquay, April 24th.

“My dearest L——,

“I am very much obliged to you for so kindly wishing to see me; I should like to see and talk to you very much if I might come now, but Papa has just had a letter from Uncle T——, to say I must not leave this till the middle of May, and I do want to get home again. If I stay a fortnight with R——, it will bring it to June. I have been away ever since February!

“I have not seen those Sermons of Dr. P——’s; I will get them, for I like those Parochial Sermons and Tracts very much, though there is something wanting in them. CHRIST does not seem *all in all* as He ought to be. Our best works without Him are worse than useless. * * * * I am sure it is wrong to be reserved with one’s parents. Oh, how I wish I could entirely break through it—it is all pride!

“I cannot pray that it may be GOD’s Will you should have those helps, for perhaps He knows you would be better without them; for, dear L——, the more help we get from man, the less do we rely for help from Him; and we must not choose our *own* way to heaven, but humbly follow His. If we do indeed love Him, we shall love His Will, and make it ours; then, *nothing* comes amiss. The fruits of the SPIRIT are indeed Love, Joy, and Peace; this made me feel you were not quite right

when you said some time ago ‘there was no more Joy for you, though you felt at Peace;’ but cultivate Love, that is the first and best.

“ You can certainly try illuminating, but I fancy it requires a great deal of patience to do it at all nicely. I should like some Texts very much. But you can be equally charitable without having a sixpence to give away, and perhaps do as much *real* good; though it is a great pleasure to be able to relieve the wants of the suffering, and what we are commanded to do if we have or can make the means. If it is GOD’s Will, dearest L——, you will be strong at the end of this summer, and your mamma will give her consent to your taking a district; but if not, and you love Him, you will not allow yourself even to wish for it. Pray that you may be allowed to work for His glory, and let no opportunity slip, and He will show you work enough; *much* may be done in your own home, have you ever spoken to your servants? do you try to make your motives visible to your own family? do you pray enough for them? As regards regularity, that depends entirely upon yourself. Your health is not a bad reason, and this trial of your patience will do you good. Think of me here—I can do nothing; and when I get home, it is little I shall be allowed to do. But there is a work at home of much more importance; and till it is done we are not fit for much else. *Our hearts must be wholly His—all our thoughts and affections;* and if we go among the poor we shall do no good unless Love to GOD is the motive for all we say and do. You have some you may visit now—make the best use of all your opportunities, and more will soon open before you. Do all your intimate friends know as much of their SAVIOUR as you do? might you not help them? If you look at your strong wish for the district, I think, dear, you will

be able to thank God for having denied it just now, though *very* hard, I well know, at first; for you thought it was right, and your real wish was to do right. But if it was not His Will, then it would be right no longer, would it? then you would not wish to have it. It may be right some day when you are more ready; if you try to look upon it in this light, and pray that His Will may be your choice, you will be happy about it again, dear. Until we have learnt to control our own hearts, we can't expect to be able to teach other people to keep theirs in order. * * * The rich as much need your Charity as the poor. If we followed our Example we should do good wherever we went; and I am sure going into the world does *us* harm, if we don't try to do *it* good. The Bible says we 'are the salt of the earth,' but we must take care we do not lose our savour. * * "

Melise enters into this rather more fully in a letter to another friend:

"*Torquay, March 3rd.*

"My dear —,

* * "I cannot agree with what you say about society. I am quite certain that general society is the greatest snare, dear —. He Who was our Example went about only to do good among rich and poor alike, and He said to His followers: 'Woe unto you when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers unto the false prophets.' It requires a high state of perfection to be able to go into society to reprove its follies and speak to it of better things, to bear to be despised and scorned. And yet, is it not in that way *only* that Scripture would lead us to enter it? I wish I could take more interest in the welfare of their souls, and then I should find courage to speak to them. I don't want to judge other

people : their cases may be altogether different, and there may be as much of 'the world' in one's own family as anywhere else. * * *

The only letter I have preserved of those she wrote to me from Torquay, expresses her feelings on the partial restoration of her health and strength. It is dated May 10th, 1856.

" * * * Mr. Y—— was taken ill on Monday, and has not been out since ; he was confined to his bed some days, and is very weak, so I fear we shall not see him again. I can't help praying that he may be spared for the sake of the Church, though it is keeping him from his *Home*. That is what I feel so much myself, dear William,—so hard to be thankful for recovered health, which seems to keep me here, though I know I ought to be. Oh may I have grace to persevere unto the end ! Sometimes I almost despair, I grow so very dark and indifferent.

" You will not be forgotten by us on Trinity Sunday.¹ How I shall miss the Holy Communion and daily prayers when we leave ! Be assured, dear William, of our constant love and prayers.

" Ever your affectionate sister,

" M. H. M. BROWNLOW."

To Miss L——.

" Monday in Whitsun week.

" Torquay, May 12th, 1856.

" My dearest L——,

" Duty calls me home [even] more than inclination, as soon as I have permission. As it is, I could not well go to B——. I am to stay a few days at Clifton in-

¹ When I was to be ordained Priest.

stead of Hampshire, and B—— is as far from thence as from Wilmslow. Is there no chance of your coming [to see me] there? We hope to leave this on Wednesday the 14th, and to be at home for the 1st of June.

"I quite think with you that our every thought and wish *should* be made known to God, but our great object ought to be to be conformed to His Will—to ask Him to bend our wills and wishes into the direction of His. The highest state of perfection is when our wills are entirely lost in *His*, for then we begin to be *one* with Him. Books are often a great help indeed, but then *only* as He chooses to make them so. So, any book He forbids *could* not help us, but the contrary.

"I think you were *quite right* to try to get the district and to wish for it as long as you thought it would be for God's glory, but when He made His Will manifest through your mother, *then* you should acquiesce, and pray, 'Thy Will be done'—as I am rejoiced to see you now can do. God is most glorified in our *entire devotion* to Him. * *

"God bless you, dear L——.

"Your loving sister,

"MELISE.'

To the same.

"Wilmslow Rectory, June 5th.

"My dearest L——,

"I thought I had told you when we were leaving Torquay? * * * I should like a text of your doing very much. 'Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST and thou shalt be saved,'—if it is not too long. * * *

"William gave me a little book, by L'Abbé Grou, on 'Devotion,'¹ explaining its full meaning, and showing how entirely we ought to consecrate ourselves to Him.

¹ "The Characters of Real Devotion," one of the clearest

I wish you could read it, but as it is by a Roman Catholic it would not do. We must never be content till we are *altogether* His. People are sadly too much inclined to rest when they have some feelings of peace and happiness, but as an aged Saint once said, 'We have *Eternity* to rest in,'—here we must *work*, either in our own souls only, or in the world besides; all have some external work to do, but internal [work] is most necessary and most difficult. Don't you find it so? Write soon to me again; I hope to be at home for some months now—God bless you, dear sister.

"Believe me yours ever lovingly,
"M. H. M. BROWNLOW."

To the same.

"Wilmslow Rectory, June 27th, 1857.

"My dearest L——,

"Your Text travelled very well; you really have done it *beautifully*. I had no idea you would succeed so well. In your next tell me the price, as I think I could get you some more orders. Could you do 'Suffer little children, &c.' for a school? I shall put mine up in my bedroom where I can see it in bed. Where did you find such pretty letters?

"I don't know 'Thoughts in past years'; is it a little book? I bought a little book called 'The Doctrine of the Cross.' It is the Life of a converted Quakeress, most interesting and instructive; trial and sickness were the greatest blessings to her in making her like her *LORD*. It is indeed a privilege to be allowed to suffer anything for Him, and with Him. Worldly people talk of *health* as the greatest of blessings; but sickness has been much

and most beautiful books on the entire surrender of the heart to God, that I have ever seen.

more blessed to me. Pray for me, dear, that now I am partially restored to health, I may not fall away, but strive to use it all for His glory.

"Thank you *very* much for wanting me at B—, I promise you that if I have to go away, I will not forget, for I should indeed like much to see you again; but as long as I *may* be here, I feel it my duty to remain, for here is my work; and we must not indulge ourselves and seek our own pleasure. Don't you long to be able to give up your own will entirely, and take His instead? sometimes it seems as though one had, and then comes a stronger wish than ever for our own.

"We must indeed deny ourselves if we will be wholly His, but in looking at others we must remember that perhaps they are not called to the same as we—or not yet; but if *we* neglect to follow His grace, and the leadings of His SPIRIT *we* shall come short in our duty, and have to answer for it, for to whom much is given of the same will much be required. So let us strive, dearest L—, to devote ourselves *entirely* to Him; but look lovingly on others, while we try to stir them up to higher things.

"I have often talked to —, but she confesses she does not realize unseen things; so while she tries earnestly to do her duty in outward things, she leaves her heart alone, and leaves eternity to care for itself. Let us pray that the HOLY SPIRIT may awaken her from that dreadful sleep, before it be too late.

"Don't you think it is our duty to try gently and lovingly to rouse all our friends, and those who come under our influence, to greater love and zeal? If we burned with love to GOD, we should love His creatures far more than we do. May He ever keep you in His Love, is the prayer of your own

"MELISE."

“ *Wilmslow Rectory, July 9th.*

“ * * * I quite agree with you that it is my duty to take care of my health, but not *love* it; it does not require the *mind* to be given to it. I may do a great deal besides, that is not in the least prejudicial to it. It is even very *bad* for one's *health* to be often thinking about it.

“ I send you an Act for Spiritual Communion. I think you will find it a help and a blessing when prevented from joining the congregation.¹ I am glad you find the out-

¹ The Act referred to is this :

“ *Spiritual Communion may be made at any time, and without being fasting. For any one that is hindered from external communion, it is well to use this method every Sunday and Holy-Day.*

“ AN ACT FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

“ My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the LORD : when shall I come to appear before the adorable Presence of GOD in the assembly of His people ? Meanwhile, I know full well, O heavenly FATHER, that Thou art everywhere near to them that call upon Thee. Accept my will and desire and since I cannot actually receive this Holy Sacrament, yet send me not empty away. Let me not be disappointed of my hope, but be graciously pleased by Thy SPIRIT to work in me the power and effect of It, while in mind and spirit I draw near Thy holy Altar.

“ O my JESUS, Thou art the true Bread that camest down from heaven, to feed us with Thine Own Self, and with wonderful sweetness and humility hast hidden Thy Self in love for my soul under visible forms in Holy Mysteries. I believe that in Thee, as Thou art there, are hidden endless treasures of spiritual gifts and rich graces, which my poor and needy soul panteth to partake of. I believe the word which Thou hast spoken, *he that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath*

ward means GOD has appointed us for communicating His Grace increasingly blessed to you. He would not have ordained them had they been unnecessary, though if we are deprived of them He is certainly able and willing to convey to us His grace without them. Oh! how great is His Love ! it seems almost too much sometimes—as if one's heart would burst—but S. Augustine says, desire stretches the heart that it may hold more, and that the more we stretch it by increasing our longings after Him, the more abundantly shall we be filled—fulfilled as the Apostle expresses it. How beautiful is the Collect for this

eternal life. Behold me wretched, well nigh perishing with hunger and cold, and exposed to many infirmities, coming to Thee that I may live by Thee. I hunger and thirst after the Bread and Cup which endure to everlasting life. Do not loathe my unworthiness, but look at my weakness and want. LORD ! I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof, but with the centurion I believe, that Thou, even when absent (that is without Sacramental Communion) canst with one word heal and enrich my soul. For if the touch of the hem of Thy garment could expel incurable diseases, what may it not avail to touch Thy most blessed Body and Blood, if not by my body, yet by my mind through longing and earnest faith: Come therefore to me and heal my sin-sick soul ; appease my hunger, satisfy my thirst, and strengthen my weakness ; for in this most Holy Sacrament, Thou art truly present. Sweet JESUS, I love Thee above all things, and desire to possess Thee within my soul. My heart is ready, my heart is ready, come in, dearest LORD, wherefore standest Thou without ? What though I am unable to receive Thee sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace Thee as being already there, and unite myself wholly to Thee. Oh ! never leave me ! now I feed upon Thee by faith and am thankful.

“ Glory be to God for all things. Amen.”

week ! Oh may you, dearest ——, be filled with Charity —that *most* excellent gift—which shall make you perfect even as He is perfect. And in His Name farewell !

“ Your loving sister,
“ MELISE.”

To the same.

“ My dearest L——,

“ * * * Humanly speaking there seems small chance of our meeting. I am to go to Torquay, or the Isle of Wight, as soon as October begins, to stay there all the winter and spring, if I live. B——, my doctors say, is just the place that won’t suit me, because it is dry and cold, and [they] won’t let you come and see me. But we know that if GOD sees fit He can bring us together,—if He saw it was for our good. What a comfort it is to think that ‘*all things*,’ even our meeting or being separated, ‘work for good to them that love Him’! for if our ‘*hairs*’ are numbered, surely not the *smallest* event happens without His Fatherly care. Trials are blessings in disguise ; let us strive so to choose His Will that we may thank Him and glorify Him even for them.

“ Oh ! I was reproved by a poor woman yesterday,—very poor indeed, and very sickly, suffering dreadful pain, and never knowing where her next meal was to come from, living by selling laces, &c., walking miles in agony,—talking of what CHRIST has done for us, she said often she felt it so she could not help bursting out singing as she walked along ! When shall we be so thankful, for He has done as much for us, and given us every temporal blessing besides ? Blessed are the poor ! Ever in Him, your loving sister,

“ MELISE.”

¹ Seventh Sunday after Trinity—“ graft in our hearts the *love of Thy Name.*”

To the same.

"I do and will continue, dear L——, to pray for you night and morning, and at noonday, for that is our principal time for praying for each other. All who sympathize with us¹ join us at that hour to pray for the Church and its particular members. One cannot always be alone at that time, but one can lift up the heart to GOD anywhere, and it is sweet to think so many brethren² are doing so with us, it seems so to realize the Communion of Saints.

"Death does indeed lose all its terrors and its sting, when we can look through with steadfast faith to JESUS, to whose closer fellowship it will admit all who love Him. May we be of that number! Don't you long to keep a more continual sense of His Presence, and be able to consecrate *every* action, small or great, to Him,—even to eat and drink to His glory.³ I find it very hard in the midst of society to recollect myself, and even [when] alone my thoughts wander off directly. Good-bye, dearest L——. God bless and keep you ever in His Love.

"Ever your most loving

"MELISE."

¹ My sister refers to all the devout members of the congregation of S. Bartholomew's.

² The prayer for S. Bartholomew's concluded thus: Holy JESU, hear all our prayers for this Church and flock; and for those our brethren who unite with us in prayer to Thee. Hear us in behalf of those who desire our prayers; and for all for whom Thou hast shed Thy precious Blood and art now an Advocate in Heaven; where with the FATHER and the HOLY GHOST Thou livest and reignest ever one GOD, world without end. Amen.

³ In a letter to another friend, on reading light literature, she says: "All Miss Sewell's books are worth reading; there is so much practical information in them. I don't object to

To the same.

"My dearest L——,

"I find I have five sheets of yours to answer. I wish I could answer them properly, for I feel so far below you in zeal and earnestness. I love to read your letters, though they make me feel my own cold-heartedness. Alas! my thoughts are scarcely ever where they ought to be, and if I lift them up, fall to earth again in a moment.

"I will try to get a look at Hewitson's Memoir next time I am in Manchester, and get it if it is not too expensive. * * * Did you ever read Suckling's Life? I think it is the best I ever read.

"How do you feel about Society—quiet dinner parties, and that sort of thing? * * * Don't you feel it very difficult to know what is God's Will in little things? We are left so much to choose for ourselves how we employ our time, apparently; yet if we are living to Him, we ought to follow His Will, not ours, in *every*, even the least, thing. I suppose it is for want of *waiting*, that we miss hearing our instructions. '*Wait on the LORD*' is a frequent expression in His Holy Word.

"I believe I shall have to go to Torquay for the winter. Of course my work is there, since it is His Will; but *what* it is I have no idea. Still, I ought not to puzzle myself about the future; '*sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*' What is my work *now?* is the question, and oh! I fear I am neglecting it. I am doing nothing, and

read books that I can get good from, *more* than harm; but I found '*Katherine Ashton*' very engrossing, though certainly not exciting. Nothing can be really trifling when we are told even to *eat and drink* for the glory of God; and that a cup of *cold water* shall not want for a reward."

feel so cold and dead. Pray, dearest L——, that I may be strengthened to do what is right, and may not lose eternal life in taking too much care of this mortality, ‘He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.’ I wish you would do this text for me on drawing paper, and I will mount it when it comes.

H——¹ has come back to us much better, I never thought she could at first: she was dangerously ill: I believe it is a gracious answer to my prayers, and I am very thankful to have her once more, especially as I was afraid she would miss the comforts she was used to, and I could not help her much. Grandmamma is still with us, and we are expecting William to-day. I hope he will be able to stir me up a little. I could wish he could get a curacy somewhere in the south, where I might spend the winters with him; but I don’t think it is right to indulge such thoughts. Our Heavenly FATHER knows what is best for both of us, and He will order it according to His Will. How hard it is to keep one’s thoughts in order—quite impossible if we are left a moment to ourselves, or forget (which is more often the case) to look up for help.

“I can’t tell you *exactly* how I am, for the doctors never tell me; I walked four miles and a half on Saturday without being too tired, so I can’t be very bad.

“I had to stay at home all yesterday (Sunday) and [have to do so] always when it is wet. The prayers at home do not feel the same; but it is our own fault, we don’t join the Congregation in *spirit*. One blessing I enjoyed at Torquay [was that of] daily prayers, and weekly Communion. I can’t tell you how I [have]

¹ Her maid, who had nursed her in infancy, and who closed her eyes in death.

missed the latter. I hope you will soon write to me again, though I feel this is a very poor return for your nice letters to your loving

"M."

To the same.

"My dearest L——,

"Thank you very much for the text. It is beautifully done, and travelled very well; at least you must let me pay the postage—and I shall never ask you to do me another text unless you will promise to apply to me if ever you want help for your district, if ever you have one, or any one you wish to aid—especially in the way of work; I am very fond of making clothes for them, and though just now while I am at home I may give away, yet at Terquay I have no opportunity, and feel it a great privation. Never be afraid of tiring me with your letters, they interest me very much, besides being a great help to me.

"If you had the choice, where you would have a district, I should say, choose one in your *own* parish, or in the district in which (by division of the parish) you are placed. For it is the Church that has divided the land into parishes, and *its* Head Who has placed you in one rather than in another; and Charity should begin at home. But I don't see that *you* have the choice; wherever one is offered, there is your mission,—if you have one nearer home you can better attend to it, but it is a great thing to have a clergyman who will guide you. I feel the want of that so much here. I may go where I like and do what I like; consequently, as I said in my last, I do nothing; though I don't think I am thereby excusable.

"I wish I could feel as you do,¹ that I was going on

¹ Melise's correspondent explains this passage thus: "I

step by step as my duty is shown me ; I always feel as if I were leaving some [thing] undone for want of energy. Often I think I will do this or that good, and then don't, for no better reason than not feeling so strongly impelled to do it as when first it entered my mind. Now if it were a good thought, GOD put it there, for me to act on it—don't you think so ? If we are willing, He will give the strength and grace, but not if we are unwilling, which I sadly fear is too often my case. It is so very hard to speak to people ; my weak flesh does so shrink from it; I don't think I pray enough that I may overcome it. If I loved JESUS as I ought, it would be an unspeakable privilege to feed His lambs. * * * It is *very hard* to tame that unruly member, the tongue. S. James says no *man* can do it. But we can do *all* things through CHRIST, but long and fearful must be the contest. If our thoughts were brought into control, our words would edify one another.

"I like what you say about 'what a Christian does should be done best,' also about improving *all* our talents, though I don't know what is the use of landscape painting—how can it be employed for His glory?—and common songs and light music, merely to *kill* our precious time (as mere *amusement* of all sort almost seems) though music of a higher class elevates the thoughts, and I dearly love to sing GOD's praises. Do you find it useful to keep an account of your actions?"

How different is the tone of this letter and of the preceding ones, in which Melise refers to the society and amusements of the world, to the one meant that deeper views of my duty were opening step by step ; but was not so presumptuous as to suppose that my practice kept pace with it."

written in December, 1853, (page 18,) where she defends herself for taking pleasure in them! And yet there was no violent tearing away of the heart from them : their beauty and charm seemed simply to fade away before the glorious presence of Him Who is the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely. The Good Shepherd has various ways of drawing His sheep out of the entangling thorns of this world. To some He blasts their earthly hopes and prospects, or startles them by a revelation of the true nature of the apples of Sodom. To others He simply manifests *Himself*, and all lesser lights grow dim and sickly before the rising of the Sun of Righteousness. Thus it was with the subject of this Memoir, and the thought of the dangers she had escaped seemed to be swallowed up in the contemplation of the Person of her Deliverer. It will be seen that while all the ground of her hope was "it is CHRIST that died," yet her heart continually added "yea rather, that is risen again," —and her gratitude for the inestimable benefit of a crucified SAVIOUR appears well nigh lost in the bliss of communion with the risen, living JESUS.

The reader may recollect the beautiful story of the mother who saw her child playing on the brink of a precipice and unconscious of his peril. Had she cried out, he might in his fright have fallen into the very danger she dreaded ; but her maternal instinct taught her a better and surer way, for baring her bosom in which her child had so often nestled she called him simply with a smile of love.

your love, but *you*. If your heart is right you will feel I meant your good, though I misjudged you, which I sincerely hope may be the case, and that you will come to us in January dearer than you left us in April. * * *

From your sincerely loving friend,

"MELISE BROWNLOW."

To Miss L— —,

"Wilmslow Rectory, Sept. 9th.

"My dearest L— —,

"* * * Mrs. P— — has just lent me the Life of Captain Hedley Vicars to read. What a very interesting one it is! have you read it? His conversion was very wonderful. How few will accept the free pardon bought for them by CHRIST's Blood! It seems too easy for them—only to *believe* and be saved. The thing I pray that I may persevere in is a constant *sense* of GOD's presence, and any thing that must so engross my thoughts as to prevent my feeling GOD is there, hinders me,—except it is positive duty. The knowledge of GOD is life eternal, and how can we know Him, without we are constantly with Him. But it is very difficult to acquire the habit; our thoughts [at least] *mine*, are so very roving.

"It is about myself [that] I find the difficulty of speaking to my brother; for I want his experience to help me. Of course we can talk freely enough on many things; but when I try to talk of *Christ*, the thought of Him and of His Love chokes me, and I cannot get a word out—hardly. Oh His Love is *so* great, and we are such undeserving wretches! how can we express it, or any of His attributes? I feel as if my heart would burst when I at all realise it;—but would that I could speak of Him, so as to show in some measure how I feel! for then perad-

venture some would catch the flame. Oh that I could feel His Love so always! When shall we see His Face revealed, *never never* to be hid from us more? If to live is CHRIST, what must it be to die, and be admitted into His *eternal* Presence? Oh! after once tasting of His Love, how is it that we *can* go back, and be so cold,—forgetful—even admit the world and some of its vanities to our hearts? As a poor servant girl said in a letter to William this morning, if we loved Him at all, ought we not to mourn all day long for our sins? How we treat Him! how we neglect Him! are we not worse than those Jews who crucified Him, for *they* knew Him not—we know Him, and *forsake* Him?

“CHRIST is REALLY present to me in the Sacrament; dearest L——, is He not so to you? I know it by experience, not because others tell me.

“O Eternal WORD of GOD, by Whose power all things were made, I will not ask how Thou canst give me Thy Flesh to eat, because I am abundantly satisfied in the truth of Thy saying, ‘This is My Body,’ since Thou canst make it become to me whatsoever Thou sayest it is. Why need I labour in vain to search out the manner of Thy mysterious Presence, when my love assures me Thou art there? All the faithful, who approach Thee with prepared hearts, they *well* know Thou art there; they feel the virtue of Thy Divine power going out of Thee, to heal their infirmities, and to inflame their hearts with a burning Charity. Thou Who art a Priest for ever, and Who hast said, Thy Flesh is meat indeed, and Thy Blood is drink indeed, I believe that Thou art the CHRIST, the SON of the living GOD, Who camest into the world, and art present in this Sacrament. LORD, increase my faith. Amen.”¹

¹ From Dean Comber and Bishop Ken: an “Act of Faith,”

"Oh! it is Heaven upon earth to receive Him at His Altar—joy unspeakable! words can in no way express it, dear L——. May you ever enjoy His Presence *here and ever.*"

To the same.

" * * * You forgot to tell me why you wanted to know if —— was at home. I should like to hear about ——, I feel almost to dread seeing her. Oh! that I might be allowed to awaken her to a sense of spiritual things; she seems to think them all dream and delusion, whereas *they* are the *realities*, *this life* is the dream. What a terrible awakening it will be to those who have misjudged! If we loved them one-tenth as much as ourselves, could we rest till we had brought them to CHRIST? Oh let us redouble our prayers and our endeavours, dearest L——. If we only look at ourselves, what blessings are promised to those who turn others to righteousness! But if we love them, or CHRIST, no other motive ought to be wanting to stir us up to do our very *uttermost*. May GOD help and bless you and also your loving sister in Him,

" MELISE BROWNLOW.

" I am sorry I was so ungrateful as never to thank you for that little book,¹ which I very much liked. * * It was curious our letters on the Eucharist should cross. I can't thank GOD enough for His goodness to you and to myself."

The following letter to one of her friends who had lost an infant nephew and godson, is a beau-
in the "Little Manual of the Holy Eucharist." Shrimpton
and Masters.

¹ The "Word and the World," by Miss Brewster.

tiful example of Melise's happy way of turning every circumstance into a motive of gratitude to God, and also of the power of sympathy which she possessed in a remarkable degree, though she so frequently laments the want of it.

"June 17th.

"My dearest H——,

"I am so very sorry for you and your family—it must indeed be a great grief to lose the first and only child. We are very sorry that we shall [not] see you on Wednesday; but much more sorry for the cause, for he was getting to an age to be loved for his own sake. But his happiness must be their comfort. He has gone to the Good Shepherd, Who carries the lambs in His arms. He has gone from the evil to come, and kept his baptismal robe spotless and pure. You will have no more anxiety about his keeping the promises you made for him at the Font. But his poor mother will feel very desolate. * * I cannot write more now, except just to assure you of my warm love and sympathy.

"Believe me, dearest H——,

"Ever affectionately yours,

"M. H. M. BROWNLOW."

CHAPTER IV.

AUTUMN OF 1856—REMOVAL TO TORQUAY—LETTERS TO
A FRIEND—LETTERS ON HER LAST BIRTHDAY—LIFE OF
MADAME GUYON—INCREASING WEAKNESS—ANNOUNCE-
MENT OF APPROACHING END—LETTERS WRITTEN IN AN-
TICIPATION OF DEATH.

“ Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil : for Thou art with me ; Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me.

“ Thou shalt prepare a Table before me against them that trouble me : Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.”

IT will have been observed from the letters in the preceding chapter that Melise was restored to comparative health and strength before she returned to Wilmslow. In fact every day seemed to manifest an improvement, and she appeared never tired of walking amid the beautiful scenery of Torquay. Even the steep hills ceased to give her pain in her lungs, and with her increasing strength, the cough, that had alarmed us all, well nigh disappeared. On her return to Wilmslow she thought she might venture to resume her riding, but on trial found

that her back was not strong enough. However she walked about a great deal, though not to any long distance, and was very active in visiting the sick and infirm. They have many little anecdotes to tell of her kindness and sympathy with all their troubles both of body and soul, and her memory is very dearly cherished in many of those poor cottages. Her great presence of mind enabled her to say the right thing at the right time, which is so important an element of useful visiting.

Melise complains in one of her letters of her inability to interest children, but she certainly gained their affections in a remarkable way; and my mother tells me that her class is still the most regular and best behaved in the Sunday School, so that perseverance seems to have effected what it may be she had no natural gift for.

From some of her last conversations with the poor, Melise seems to have had a presentiment that she should never be able to visit them again, and to have spoken very much to them of that land where there shall be no parting words or tears; else to all appearance it appeared likely that she would derive as much benefit this year from her stay at Torquay as she did the spring before; but God ordered it otherwise, and soon after her return to Torquay in October, she became conscious of decreasing strength. All exercise became more and more an effort to her, and though she was still able to walk some distance, yet any steep ascent was painful, and when I joined her and my parents at the begin-

ning of November her cough was very troublesome.

Another sign of her ripeness for her eternal home was the greater ease with which she was able to speak of heavenly things. JESUS was so much in her heart, that she could not forbear speaking or writing about Him.

Those acquainted with the life of S. Theresa and other Saints who have led contemplative lives, cannot fail to have been struck with the vivid way in which they speak of our Blessed LORD as a living Person still walking about among us. Thomas à Kempis, when inwardly drawn to converse with his Divine Master, would break off in the middle of a conversation as if some visitor had sent to speak with him. This obedience to the inspirations of grace tends more than anything else to make the soul realize the Presence of GOD, and the habitual walking in His Presence is the surest way of Perfection. "I am the Almighty GOD, walk before Me, and be thou perfect."—Gen. xviii. 1. And how does His Presence sanctify the meanest place or occupation! JESUS is as truly present in the Carpenter's shop as in the Temple itself; in the midst of the crowd who throng around, unconscious of the virtue of His touch, as on the lonely mountain top, where the favoured contemplative cries, LORD, it is good for us to be here. What storms of passion does His Presence quell, what crowds of evil thoughts does it put to flight! "Thou art with me" is the charm against every evil.

The following extract displays the Love of the Good Shepherd in thus carrying His lambs in His very Bosom.

To her Brother.

"Kitnocks, Oct. 7th, 1856.

"My dearest William,

"I have been wanting to write to you, but I did not know where to direct [my letter] to. I came down here yesterday. I had such a very happy journey; London was very distracting, but then JESUS came to me, and seemed so near, and that text seemed so inexpressibly sweet to me, 'My Beloved is *mine*, and I am *His*.' Would that all could enjoy His Presence, and sweet communion with Him!" * * *

To Miss L———.

"Torquay, [October, 1856.]

"My dearest L———,

"Mamma brought me your kind letter to Bristol. I was only in London from the first to the fifth [of October], and only knew two days before that grandmamma could take me in; so you see I had no time for a visit to B———, or one from you which grandmamma proposed. William has not got a curacy yet. I can't say I wish papa could get a living in the south, I do *love Wilmslow*. I don't know Leighton's 'Rules for a Holy Life'; but I am *very fond* of his 'Commentary on S. Peter.' — — has not come back yet; it is very difficult to talk to her; she seems to know nothing about the inner life, though anxious to *do* what is right. *This life* is to her a reality —all else dream, speculation. They tell me you have grown *very dreamy*. If they knew how great a King was there to be entertained, they would not wonder we thought more of Him than of them; but we must take

care that we are not amusing ourselves with our own thoughts, instead of trying to make those He loves happy for His sake."

To the same.

"*Torquay, Nov. 5th.*

"My dearest L——,

"Thank you for your letter. I am very glad you have got your wish at last. It is, indeed, a blessing to be allowed to minister to CHRIST in His poor, and to have a real sister to help you in the work is delightful; but you must make up your mind to many disappointments and trials. The more time you can devote to prayer for them, the greater blessing you will obtain; and never, dearest L——, say a word to them without asking GOD's blessing on it, for it is only His HOLY SPIRIT that can take it home to their hearts, and of ourselves we should often do more harm than good. Kingsley says we ought to feel for them all as *sisters*, and so we ought; but it is very hard to overcome our natural dislike, or rather to look at the sinner apart from the sin. Sin we must loathe; but if we remind ourselves that CHRIST loves the sinner, and has died for her, it helps us to love her too. Perhaps you will think this is all my hard-heartedness; but wait till you have tried and tried again to make some impression, and you will find you need much of GOD's grace to enable you to go on cheerfully and lovingly. Remember, dear L——, your promise to come to me if you want any little work. I should be so thankful to have anything to do for CHRIST here. I seem only able to think and pray—while He is so good to me.

"You say nothing in your letter about coming to see me. Do you think you could either before or after

Christmas? Any time would suit me; I should be so delighted to have you for three weeks or a month, or as much longer as you could stay. You could come to Portsmouth, and Salisbury, and Bristol, or sleep a night at Hill-street. Mamma is anxious to be at home as much as possible, but she may not leave me alone; so if you could come and make a long stay, it would be really a kindness.

"I did not believe them when they told me you were sadly altered, and dreamy; but prayed GOD to open their hearts, and *make them so too.*

"Ever your loving sister,

"MELISE."

To the same.

"Torquay; Dec. 5th.

"My dearest L——,

"I hope you are quite well again? Dear L——, 'the long life' is but a particle, a speck, a mite, of endless years' duration infinite. But I have often felt as you do, especially when I had been called back from the grave, (I might almost say), after I had been ill. I found it very difficult to give up my will to GOD, I longed so to die, and could not bear to look forward to a long life; but then I could not say, 'To *me* to live is CHRIST.' If we are *wholly* His, we shall *wish* to wait His Will. Consecrate yourself anew, dearest L——, to His service, and beg Him to keep you entirely His—not even to have a wish of your own; it is the only way to be truly at peace. Without His grace I could not bear to look forward to what is most likely before me—many years of extreme delicacy, gradually getting worse, preventing me from doing any active work for Him. It seems so much easier to bear all at

once, to suffer and get well, or suffer and die, instead of existing in patience with nothing to do or suffer. But He knows what is best for each, and tries us accordingly. Oh how He loves us ! Would that we could love Him as we ought ! He is withdrawing some of His consolations from you, to see if you love Him for His own sake ; don't give way, but *trust*. None loves as He loves.

“ ‘ On ! on through toils and fears,
On ! on through griefs and tears :
Then, joy for countless years
Never ending.’

“ May His grace always prevent and follow you, and keep you steadfast unto the end.

“ Your loving sister,
“ MELISE BROWNLOW.”

To Miss — —.

“ Torquay, Nov. 12th.

“ My dear — ,

“ I am very sorry to hear you have been so poorly, and with such a tiresome complaint; but no doubt it was mercifully ordered for your good, as I trust you were able to feel it. We cannot be CHRIST's disciples, or GOD's children, without we suffer something. * * You guess rightly the reason of my being here: I am not so well as when I left last May. I never lost my cough, though in the hot weather it was much better, but increases with the cold. * * I can't promise anything about visiting you: my ways are in GOD's hands; if I get no better I never shall, but if it is His Will I should regain my strength it is my wish to [do] so; more I dare not say, dear — ”

To the same.

"Torquay, Nov. 29th.

" * * About suffering being necessary to discipleship—does not disciple mean a follower? and does not CHRIST say plainly, If a man will be My disciple, let him take up his cross and *follow* Me? Is not a *cross necessarily* painful? Was not His *whole* life suffering? How can we then be said to be following Him, when our whole life is spent in ease and enjoyment?" * *

The three next letters written to a very dear friend of Melise's show that she was not afraid of risking the loss of friendship she greatly valued rather than keep silence when it was her duty to speak plainly. In this she was but acting on the directions given in Ephesians v. 11, which are thus commented on by S. Chrysostom: "Convict thy brother," he says, "incur enmity for the love's sake which thou owest to CHRIST, for the love's sake which thou owest to thy brother. Arrest him as he is on his road to the pit of destruction. For to admit him to our table, to treat him with civil speeches, with salutations, and with entertainments, these are no signal proofs of friendship. No, those I have mentioned are the boons which we must bestow upon our friends, that we may rescue their souls from the wrath of GOD. When we see them lying prostrate in the furnace of wickedness, let us raise them up. 'But,' they say, 'it is of no use, he is incorrigible.' However, do thou thy duty, and then thou hast excused thyself to GOD. Hide not

thy talent. It is for this that thou hast speech, it is for this thou hast a mouth and a tongue, that thou mayest correct thy neighbour. It is dumb and reasonless creatures only that have no care for their fellows, and take no account of the rest. But dost thou, who callest God, 'FATHER,' and thy neighbour, 'brother,' when thou seest him committing unnumbered wickednesses, dost thou prefer his good-will to his welfare? No, do not so, I entreat you. There is no so certain evidence of friendship as never to overlook the sins of our brethren. * * Wherefore, I entreat you, be ye never backward to reprove, nor displeased at being reproved. For as long indeed as anything is carried on in the dark, it is carried on with greater security; but when it has many to witness what is done, it is brought to light. By all means then let us do all we can to chase away the deadness which is in our brethren, to scatter the darkness, and to attract to us the *Sun of Righteousness*. For if there be many shining lights, the path of virtue will both be easy to themselves, and they which are in darkness will be more easily detected, while the light is held forth and puts the darkness to flight. Whereas if it be the reverse, there is fear lest, as the thick mist of darkness and of sin overpowers the light, and dispels its transparency, those shining lights themselves should be extinguished. Let us be then disposed to benefit one another, that one and all we may offer up praise and glory to the God of loving-kindness, by the grace and loving-kindness

of CHRIST." (S. Chrysost. Hom. xviii. on Eph., Oxford Translation).

This long extract is given because this office of true Charity is too often regarded as an uncharitable judging of others.

To Miss — —.

"Torquay, Jan. 9th.

" My dear — —,

" * * ' Hours with the Mystics' is not in our library, so I am not very likely to come in contact with it. I don't like the title *at all*. It seems to me *much* more mysterious that we can live away from GOD, than that through the power of His grace we should be re-united to Him; *that* is only mysterious to the carnal mind. I finished 'Milner' last winter. I was very much interested in the first three volumes; but was *very* glad when I had finished the last. I have since had S. Augustine's 'Confessions' given to me; they are so beautiful!

" I admire that hymn you sent me *very* much; and, dear — —, I agree with the lady who sent you your character. I greatly fear you have no *real* religion yet; though I do indeed hope I may be mistaken. Now and then you have strong emotions, but *they* are not religion; and you have a taste for religion, and like to hear religious people talk about it; and believe in its effects on other people. But have you, dearest — —, ever given your heart to GOD? or can you say you love the LORD your GOD with all your heart? Until there is vital religion in the soul, one never knows where they may turn to find it, to Romanism, Mahommedanism, Judaism, or Mormonism!

" I do long to see you a true and *holy* Cath^r."

one object in all you do—GOD's glory. I am afraid you will think me very severe, but we *cannot* be half-and-half. GOD will have our whole heart, or none. And when we think how much He loves us, how can we bear to treat Him so ungratefully, or to see others doing so? I wish I could teach all the world to love Him. Write to me again soon, and believe me your very affectionate friend,

"M. H. M. BROWNLOW."

To the same.

"My dearest ——,

"I have been longing to recall my last letter ever since it went, because I am nearly sure you would misunderstand it, and I fear it would do you harm by making you angry and feel hurt.

"I know when you were with me, you told me you once *REALLY* believed, but that you then feared you had fallen back; that you could not *realise* the great truths of religion as you felt you ought to do if you had saving faith. That is what I meant by *real* religion. Of course I only judge of you by your letters, and I was laughing when I talked of your turning Mormon, &c. I do indeed feel very anxious to see you firmly 'established, strengthened, settled' in the faith; and I believe you have known enough of it at one time to know where to turn when you are once determined to give up your own will, and seek after GOD.

"You belong to that school which teach that the heart must be changed. But, alas! too many call, and believe themselves to be religious, who yet have their natural heart and inclinations all unaltered. But we are to have the same mind which was in CHRIST JESUS; and instead of walking our own ways, if we are *really*

children of GOD, we must be led by the SPIRIT of GOD, and not walk after the flesh, but after the SPIRIT.

" Does not this require that all our natural inclinations should become dead, that we may do God's Will, and love what He loves, and desire what He desires, hating what He hates? Do write to me freely and tell me your impressions, for I long to know how you are going on. I hope to see you again some day; but why should I not know more of you by letter? Believe me ever to remain, dearest —, your truly loving friend,

" M. H. M. BROWNLOW."

To the same.

" *Torquay, Feb. 11th.*

" My dearest —,

" I was very thankful to find you had taken my letter kindly. I often wish every one would speak plainly; but as they don't, it is sometimes dangerous to say out what comes into your mind; and some are so ready to put uncharitable interpretations, or motives to your words. But I cannot help feeling a deep interest in anybody with whom I have had any religious intercourse, and being anxious to see how they go on—longing to see them surmount the difficulties that lie in their path, and come to a more perfect knowledge of things eternal. I don't suppose you are different from other people; I believe there are very many quite as varying and changing as yourself, who yet become 'established, strengthened, settled,' as soon as they begin to build upon the Rock. Are you beginning to build? Are you *doing* anything particular for Him, Who has done and continues to do so much for you?

"As long as we are in the body we must make the body work for GOD, or it will assuredly make us work for somebody else. I find it a peculiar difficulty here to keep alive spiritual feeling, because there is so little in which the body can help, and they are joined together in this life, and can't work separately. Good books and good friends are undoubtedly great means of help; but if we don't make use of them by action, that temporary warmth only destroys our vital energies, like paper put on a fire—it burns up bright for a minute, but is far more cold and dead afterwards.

"I say all this about works, for I know you are thrown among those who are dreadfully afraid if we work at all we shall come to trust in it for our salvation, forgetting that 'faith without works is *dead*.'

"You put a wrong meaning on my words if you fancy *I* want to convert all the world to the love of GOD. I should be equally content for anyone else to be the instrument, only I wish they could love Him; but we know they never will *here*. I do not wish for opportunities beyond those I have. I know if I fulfilled them thoroughly GOD would give me more; and if it should please Him to restore me to health, I trust He will also give me grace to spend *all* in His service, in whatever station He thinks best for me. I can't say what I may do if I live to leave this place. * * With much love believe me yours very affectionately,

"M. H. M. BROWNLOW."

The following are extracts from two letters written on her last birthday on earth.

To Mrs. F. V. M.—.

"Torquay, Dec. 12th, 1856.

" My dearest E——,

" Many thanks for your kind wishes and letter. A birthday is really a solemn day; one in which we are reminded of our progress through time, and the near approach of eternity. Blessed indeed shall we be, if found each year more and more ready, [for the time] when that one shall come when we shall be born into immortality.
* * *

To her Brother.

"Torquay, Dec. 13th, 1856.

" My dearest William,

" Thank you for your dear letter, and for your wishes and prayers. GOD grant [that] those which refer to my soul may be granted; for the rest I desire with all my heart to say, 'Thy Will be done,'—but sometimes it is very hard not to wish to depart and be with CHRIST,—especially yesterday, when every one was wishing for me prolonged life; it was almost more than I could bear; but JESUS was very near to me. Oh! how can I ever thank Him enough. It is the thought of being kept from His Presence that is so painful, but if He is invisibly, but *sensibly* present with me here, I ought in patience to await His time.

" Don't let the others read this; they will think I don't care for them; but I know, dearest William, you *really* wish me to love Him best of *all*.

" I did not open your book till yesterday, thank you so much for it, I am sure I shall like it. I have just finished Mr. Marshall's Memoir; it is very interesting, especially the latter part, from his joining the Church.
* * *

In the following letter to her friend Miss L— — there appears the same solemn view of what a birthday really is.

"Torquay, Jan. 8th, 1857.

" My dearest L— —,

" I must write to send you my best wishes on your birthday. May each one you see here find you in closer union with your GOD! *Temporal* happiness, in the common acceptation of the word, I cannot altogether wish you, for through much tribulation we must follow the LORD, for we cannot be His disciples without we take up His Cross; but every spiritual happiness I do indeed pray may be yours for time and for eternity. I hope you are still going on in the narrow way, seeking in all things only to do His Will, and having no other wish. Try to see His Hand more in all that afflicts you, for nothing however small, or wherever it may appear to come from, happens to you without His express permission; and though all looks dark and gloomy, yet remember 'the trial of your faith worketh patience,'—and 'patience experience, and experience hope.'

" I send you the bit of hair you asked for; I cannot pretend to tie it up as elaborately as the piece you gave me at school, which is still in my work-box! I have got a book¹ for you, but it is so wet to-day, I cannot get it weighed and stamped. If your Mamma objects to it, will you send it me back? but get her to read a little before she condemns it. There are some things in it you won't like, but the greater part must be fully felt and approved by any one who loves JESUS. I love it; it was bought for you some time ago, but I cut the leaves and

¹ The Bishop of Brechin's Edition of Pinart's Meditations on the Suffering Life of our LORD.

read it, and should be glad to see it back again, but I want you to have it, and hope you may."

To her Brother.

"*Torquay, Jan. 2nd, 1857.*

"My dearest William,

"I long to hear from you from Tetbury, what you are doing, or the doings you find going on there. I hope you won't find the large church so trying when you get used to it. You have been a great deal in my mind lately, and I do indeed pray that you may be made the instrument of much good there in bringing souls to a knowledge of their SAVIOUR, and glory to GOD.

"I wish you would always speak and write freely to me, for GOD has very often blessed your words and made them very useful to me. I have consecrated myself anew to His service at His Altar, and I entreat you to pray that I may be *entirely* His. As you say you feel yourself, I don't seem to grow in holiness. I am reading Madame Guyon's Life. What entire oneness with GOD she seems to have attained; but what years of trial she went through first! I suppose we ought not to be impatient even to become sanctified, since CHRIST is the Finisher as well as the Author of our faith,—He will complete it in His own good time if we will only resign ourselves entirely to Him, which it is my wish and intention [to do], but I seem so often to forget that I have any one's pleasure to consult but my own. Self is indeed *hateful* to my soul, but manages to creep in unnoticed at all points. But it is post-time. I wish I could write as I feel, and speak to you when I see you, dearest William, for you help me more than any one.

"Ever your very affectionate sister,

"M. H. M. BROWNLOW."

To the same.

"Torquay, Jan. 20th.

" My dearest William,

" Thank you for your letter. I am very thankful you have an earnest fellow labourer, and by your account the people seem attentive, and I do trust many may receive the Word into an honest heart, where it will bring forth abundant fruit to God's glory and your encouragement. * * * A deep abiding sense of our own utter weakness and sinfulness is indeed what we all need (I especially) to make us depend solely on God and seek entire unity with Him. * * *

The Life of Madame Guyon, mentioned in the former of the last two letters, appears to have been made of great service to Melise. The lofty aspirations of that remarkable woman, and the steadiness with which she pursued the prize set before her, even union with God, excited the admiration of the subject of this Memoir, and encouraged her in following such a noble example. The defects of Madame Guyon's teaching were such as were not likely to affect a person of such humility as Melise, who would have been the last to have supposed herself to have attained what S. Paul tells the Philippians he had not; she certainly never exhibited any of those peculiarities which are supposed to be characteristics of Quietism. Her own remarks on the Life of the Rev. R. A. Suckling, written more than two years before this, show the spirit in which she habitually studied religious biography. "It is very interesting: still there is

much to pause over and consider ; like the *inner history* of all holy men, there is a great deal of instruction to ourselves,—are we so earnestly and fervently striving to work God's Will?" It was evidently in this spirit that she read Madame Guyon's Life, which she perused with great attention ; in fact, one of the last things she did while able to write was to copy out for her mother's use that lady's Instructions for Prayer.

To Miss M. A. H—, another cousin with whom she had much communication on spiritual things, she writes :—

"Jan. 5th, 1857.

" My dearest M—,

" * * * I make it a special prayer for you that GOD would in His own good time give you calmness of spirit, which cannot fail to be the case when we see GOD in all that befalls us. But how difficult it is to resign ourselves entirely into His Hands! I thought I had done it long ago, but I find *self* reigning still. I formally promised and vowed at His Altar the first Sunday of this year, with His help to be for ever entirely His. Oh! dear, pray that I may never in any degree withdraw this promise, but may have grace to fulfil it. I am reading Madame Guyon's Life ; it is so interesting—do get it from the Library ; she seems to have had *no* will, not the slightest wish that was not GOD's ; but she had to bear many crosses, before she reached such a state of perfection. But oh! how can we dread the Cross, if it leads to such a crown ? to be *one* with GOD—only think, and that here on earth ! I would that He would pile them on me as heavy as ever I can bear it, if only He would

bring me out into Himself with this *horrid* self quite crushed out. But our times are in His Hands ; my prayer is, ‘Spare me not, but make me *One* with Thee, O LORD.’ GOD has indeed been gracious to me, and is just beginning to show me how utterly *vile* and worthless I am, and how ungrateful for such favours. I cannot say, I can only pray for a small share of grace, because I am not worthy of more ;—I am not worthy of the smallest crumb ! but with *Himself*, I boldly ask for *all* the universe contains. I cannot do without CHRIST, and with Him will He not surely give us all things ? It is a fault too many fall into, in being too modest to ask or expect perfection ; the consequence is, they fall very far short of it ; but has not GOD said, ‘Be ye holy, *even as I am* Holy,’¹ and will He require anything impossible of us ? He only requires that we subject our wills to His, and He will make us what He requires ; for we cannot make ourselves holy in any way. Faith in His Power, and submission, or rather acquiescence in His Will is our share ; and let us pray earnestly for each other that we may possess it, and not be too anxious for the consolations of His grace when He may see best to withhold them from us. Sympathy must be acquired by constant perseverance and prayer, I find it *very* hard, but if I tried it oftener, I should doubtless find it easier. With much love in Him,

“ Your very affectionate sister,
“ M. H. M. B.”

To Miss L— —.

“ Commenced January 20th.

“ My dearest L— —,

“ * * I am very glad you may have that book,

1 “ Ye shall be holy, for I am holy.”—Levit. xi. 44, quoted

for I do like it so much ; it brings so very forcibly before one what CHRIST suffered willingly for us ; it seems impossible to read and not burn with Love. Alas that the flame so soon dies down in these cold uncongenial hearts of ours !

"I shall be anxious to hear about your district when you have entered upon it, for I know a little of that sort of work, and none is so intensely interesting. * * *

"Your lying down to think and going to sleep¹ is what I am so very liable to do. When I sit down to meditate upon GOD, I am so very apt to grow drowsy ; it seems so shocking, but I suppose it partly arises from the weakness of our flesh in straining after things so much above us. I generally find that I can most realise His Presence when I am silently working,—but we never should lose it.

"I think on the whole you will find your district a great comfort to you ; it will draw you out of yourself, and help you to realize CHRIST's Presence more ; for whatever we do for the poor, He has said is done to *Him*. Is it not a blessed thought that though we cannot see Him in the flesh, yet we can minister unto Him ? 'I was hungry, and ye fed Me,—I was naked and ye clothed Me.' Looking at it in this light, does it not appear the greatest privilege we can be allowed ? I often feel it to be a very great trial to be cut off from it,—but it is His Will ; He has some other work He designs for me ;—patience. It is sometimes very hard to feel myself getting better, and Heaven postponed as it were, and to say

1 S. Peter i. 15, 16. S. Matt. v. 48 : "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your FATHER Which is in heaven is perfect."

¹ Melise's correspondent was unwell, and on that account obliged to lie down. She employed the time in meditation, but sometimes slept from exhaustion.

joyfully 'Thy Will be done,' or to give thanks for returning health. Not that I wish to escape *any* of the trials of this world, for they will purify me if GOD will be with me in them ; and the more we suffer here for Him the more shall we rejoice with Him hereafter ; for though we cannot merit *any* thing, much less our own salvation, yet He has graciously promised to reward us for every good work, especially for suffering and bearing His Cross ; and nothing else but trial and suffering seems capable of crushing self out of us. But when one thinks of Heaven, when one thinks of Jesus, how does one long to be free to fly into His Arms, to gaze for ever with undazzled eyes upon the King in His Beauty—upon the Face of my Beloved ! Of course sickness has its depressing moments, and when in weariness and pain I *too* often grumble, and like to tell all my grievances ; yet if they tell me I am worse, my heart beats quick with joy ; and when they tell me I am better, I have to pray for patience ; —and I am a *great deal* better, beginning to get quite rosy again, though my doctor said he was quite alarmed about me one day, but I can walk two miles, and eat and sleep, so am not very bad—only obliged to take very great care of this horrid self, which thereby finds great excuse for self-indulgence. Oh ! that I could do God's Will in every little thing, that *self* might as it were become annihilated in me !

"From your loving sister in CHRIST,
"MELISE."

To her Brother.

"Torquay, February 20th.

"My dearest William,

"Thank you for your kind letter ; you will have plenty to do now ; I am very thankful the people are coming to you, and showing real anxiety about their

souls. I often pray that you may be the means of bringing many to CHRIST. * * *

"Mr. Y—— is going to take the Lent lectures again, I hope I shall be able to go sometimes, but I am very weak and can hardly manage it just now. I had to sit down all the service on Sunday, but I have felt better the last two days. God's Will be done. Much love from Mamma and myself.

"Ever your most loving sister,
"M. H. M. BROWNLOW."

The weakness alluded to in this and other letters gradually increased, and her uncle, Dr. C——, came down from London with another physician to hold a consultation on her state of health. The result of their examination is told in the two following letters, which manifest how completely the Grace of God is able to rob Death of his sting, and to make the Christian more than conqueror through Him that loved us.

To her Brother.

"*Torquay, March 2nd.*

"My dearest William,

"Uncle T—— came down to see me yesterday, and brought Dr. W——, with him, and they had a long examination of me, and consultation afterwards with Mr. T——. They reported,—my chest—nothing much the matter, but it was my great weakness [that] made Papa wish them to see me; for that Dr. W——, said they could prescribe nothing but Cod Liver Oil, if they could put that in any shape that would agree with me, he thought I might get strong; but Uncle T—— told Mamma

he feared I should not be able to take it any way, and then diet was the only remedy, which without any appetite would be more likely to weaken than strengthen.

"So you see, dearest William, it is God's Will you should prepare your mind to give me up even as Abraham did Isaac, in that beautiful lesson that came in ~~so~~ appropriately yesterday afternoon.¹

"Thanks be to God for His unspeakable mercy to me! I feel quite happy and content whichever way I am to go; but I do long to see my dear parents resigned. I was so rejoicing yesterday, that Uncle T—— and Mr. T—— told mamma the truth; but I find she has made herself a loophole, and still thinks I shall get well on the dieting, if I don't on cod-liver [oil]. I have been getting weaker so long now, while taking everything to strengthen me, that the end looks near and bright; but I trust I do not wish for my sufferings to be shortened, but to be entirely conformed to the likeness of my blessed SAVIOUR, whom I long to see —*then* I shall be like Him.

"Uncle T—— thinks I may go home sooner than I did last year, which will be nice. Don't be anxious about me, dearest William. If I go away, we shall soon meet never to part, and it may yet please GOD to restore me to perfect or partial health; but He seems asking you now to offer me up to Him. Much love with the earnest prayers of

"Your most affectionate sister,

"M. H. M. BROWNLOW."

To Miss L——.

"My dearest L——,

"I should have written to you before, but I

¹ The First Sunday in Lent.

have been so very weak, it was quite a labour; but I will try and write to you now, for I shall not write you very many more letters I think. I am very sorry to hear they are all ill together in your family, it is very trying indeed. * * Do write and tell me fuller particulars and how they are getting on. I did as you asked me at once; but He knows best.

"Uncle T—— was here on Sunday, and brought Dr. W—— to see me. They said, unless I could take cod-liver oil nothing would strengthen me; and they have never been able to make it agree with me hitherto. I was glad they spoke so plainly, and I trust GOD will give me grace to use the remaining portion of my time in preparing to meet Him. I feel joyful at the very thought of it; but I know Satan is often allowed to urge doubts at the last. I shall need your prayers, dear L——, both that I may employ my time well, and that JESUS will be with me in the 'dark valley.' My poor parents will feel it sadly; though Uncle T—— spoke to mamma so plainly, yet she throws off the idea, and is full of hope, almost [of] certainty.

"We shall soon meet for ever I trust, dearest L——. Oh! that none of either family fall short! We ought to use more prayer, more diligence for their salvation.

"I like to hear about your district, and am very glad the people are attentive to you—is it far off?

"Mr. Y——, whom we liked so much last year, is giving Lent Lectures. I have not been yet, (but almost think I shall to-day,) and only go to the Sacrament on Sunday: the whole service is almost too much for me.

"Ever your loving sister in JESUS,
"MELISE."

"May GOD help and bless you, dearest L——. This

is a selfish letter, when you are so full of trouble at home; but all is sent in love, and it is far better to lose health or sight than *Him*. May these troubles be blessed to all!"

To the same.

" My dearest L——,

" You wanted a scrap when I was able. I am very much obliged to you for doing all you can for my restoration to health, but if your doctors¹ have to rely on cod [liver] oil they would suit me no better than mine, for it kills me. I took a few teaspoonfuls nearly a fortnight ago, and have not yet stopped the diarrhoea they started, though taken with the strongest astringents; else I have plenty of lungs left, no one would give me up on that score.

" One great blessing I have,—such a holy man to visit me, Mr. Y——; he is so kind and good. He is coming on Monday at 11.15 to administer the Holy Communion, and will give it me once a week, now I cannot get out. I never knew the comfort of a clergyman's visits before, and cannot but thank God for bringing me such a one. He is giving a course of Lent Lectures, which I had hoped to hear; most beautiful they are: the theme—'The Cross'—the last text,² ' All the day long have I stretched forth My Hands in vain.'

" How are all your people? I am always glad to get a letter, though I don't often feel well enough to write one. If I were at home I might write lying down; but here I have no convenience, and my arms seem so weak to hold up, and go to sleep directly.

¹ Her friend was very desirous for her to put herself under homoeopathic treatment.

² Or rather subject, the text probably being Romans x. 21.

"CHRIST is sensibly present very often; but weakness dulls thought, and sometimes I seem more going backwards. It is altogether His work in you, none of mine, dearest L——. May He ever bless and keep you near Him.

"Your loving sister in Him,

"MELISE.

"What sort of thing would you like of mine? A book, pencil-case, or something I have worn?"

To her Father.

"Torquay, March 17th.

"My dear Papa,

"Thank you very much for your letter. I feel a little better to-day, so take the opportunity of writing. I think I have nearly got over the effects of the oil, not that I can expect to get up my strength again in a hurry, though I dare say when I can sit out of doors it will revive me a little. I manage to eat better breakfasts than I did, which is a good sign. I have no repugnance to the homeopathic system, and will try anything you wish, dear Papa, though, as you say, 'our times are in GOD's hands.' He can make me well, if He sees fit; but it seems as if He were calling me 'Home;' and for myself I long to go where sin shall be no more, but where I shall ever behold the Face of my Father which is in heaven. My sickness is no trouble or sorrow to me; for you and dear mamma I do feel troubled, for I know you will be loth to part with me, and perhaps for your sakes GOD may yet spare me as He did before. If He does, may He give me grace to be a better daughter than I have been, alas! * * *

To her Brother.

" My dearest William,

" I feel a little better this morning, so begin an answer to your kind letter. Write to me when you have time, for your letters are always a comfort; but I am not strong enough to write often. I lie down nearly all day, and I have not my convenient table here. * * * I wish for you here sometimes, indeed very often. You would come if I were worse, would you not? but I am rather better just now, only I still get weaker. And for our dear parents' [sake], perhaps it were better that I were taken away, because they love me so much, and God will comfort them. * * * Mr. Y—— is so kind in visiting me, and came yesterday and gave us the Holy Communion. It was so refreshing! I had rather dreaded It, for fear of wandering thoughts, but was wonderfully helped, and felt very happy afterwards. I wish you could have been with us. Sometimes I seem so very cold and dead, only thinking about making myself comfortable, and grow sleepy directly I begin to lift up my heart; but Mr. Y—— says I must not mind that, because GOD knows how weak I am. * * *

" Ever your most loving sister,

" M. H. M. BROWNLOW."

The following letter, written in a very irregular hand, shows signs of increasing weakness. She was at that time only able to sit at the table for a very short time.

To Miss L——.

" [Torquay,] March 28th.

" My dearest L——,

" Thank you very much for your many kind

letters, they are a great comfort to me ; I hope you will go on with them. They talk now of sending me home while I can be moved, as they see it is hopeless to expect any improvement. The diarrhoea has ceased, and left swelling behind, which will soon render me immovable. I shall be very thankful to go home, if it is GOD's Will. But, oh ! I am so happy, I don't care what comes if only JESUS keeps so near ! I could hardly contain myself all yesterday, and was very glad of the opportunity of seeing my doctor alone, [and] of speaking to him ; and I had the comfort of the prayers of Mr. Y—— ; he is coming again on Monday to administer the Holy Communion. He is so sympathizing, and speaks so beautifully of God's Love, and always prays for just what I want most.

" CHRIST will comfort you, dearest L——. You know we shall be nearer then than now. Perhaps I shall be able to see you, and now we can't meet. Would you like my little text-book that I read *every* morning before saying my prayers ? I wear no ornament, and a ribbon, or a collar, you would soon wear out : or would you like my Prayer Book ? I can't think of anything else I have used constantly.

" GOD for ever bless you and keep you, dearest L——.

" Your sister in Him,

" MELISE."

Crossed in pencil.

" Have you begun your class ? It will be rather difficult to know what to read to them ; but it will be very useful, if you can get an influence over them.

" If it had been God's Will I should have tried homœopathy, for He over-rules all things, and for our good."

CHAPTER V.

RETURN FROM TORQUAY TO WILMSLOW—PREPARATIONS FOR DEATH—LAST LETTER—RAPID DECLINE—LAST FEW DAYS—DEATH—FUNERAL—CONCLUSION.

“ He shall gather the lambs with His Arm and carry them in His Bosom.”

“ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life : and I will dwell in the House of the LORD for ever.”

“ I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My Hand.”

It was towards the end of March that Melise's rapidly increasing weakness warned us to prepare for that separation which she already felt as near, but which we could not bring ourselves to contemplate as so close at hand. In fact she still looked so well in the face, that no one could have believed that within five weeks she would be lying cold and dead ; and though her weakness was certainly very great, yet it was hoped that the summer sun and her native air would revive her, at any rate for a time. Her mother wrote on the 23rd of March :—“ All say there is no immediate danger, but the dear child is very, very much weaker, but so happy and resigned. She is cheerful, though constantly on the sofa, ex-

cept when she drives out for an hour whenever the weather permits her to do so, and that refreshes her most."

The clergyman to whom she refers in the preceding letters continued to visit her as long as she remained at Torquay ; and as she was unable to go to Church, he gave her the Blessed Sacrament every week. He says of her : " I much regret that I did not see her sooner, and travel with her in her spiritual progress. The impression she made upon me was that she had been made meet for the inheritance of the Saints by the HOLY SPIRIT's teaching, to which she looked through all outward means. There was no speculativeness about her, no vain inquiring of any kind. It was the simple wish to know GOD's will, and do it : to accept the Church as her appointed Teacher, and to follow it : to be nourished by the Sacramental Body of our Blessed LORD, and to grow in grace thereby, and in the knowledge of Him. She had loved God as her FATHER, and she yearned for Heaven as her Home. There was no clinging to earth. She sat loose even to the dearest family affection, though she valued it to the full. And though there was a great desire to go to CHRIST, yet this was not accompanied with the least impatience. She submitted to the bodily remedies that were applied to her, but her great comfort was the aid of God's Priest, because she felt that God spoke to her through His ministering servant. * * Thank God that I was permitted to minister to her, slight as that ministry was."

I cannot forbear pausing here to notice the exceeding Love of the Good Shepherd in thus providing for my beloved sister's spiritual wants. Surely goodness and mercy *did* follow her all the days of her life. From her earliest years her soul appears to have yearned for the care of one of those to whom JESUS said, "Feed My lambs;" and now, just at the time when she most needed it, her wish was granted. It is true she had both a father and a brother in the sacred ministry; but, as I found at her deathbed, a near relation cannot well fulfil the work of a Priest. Natural feelings on both sides prevent his being looked upon simply as an ambassador of CHRIST; and a dread of wounding these feelings, perfectly right in itself, prevents that unreserved communication with the soul necessary for really profitable spiritual guidance. GOD forbid that I should for a moment justify that reserve on matters of eternal interest, and indifference to the spiritual welfare of those of one's own household which is so prevalent; but I would remark, what is the experience of almost every one who has been led to think much on the subject, that a relation, however near and dear, is not the *natural* guide in spiritual things; and jealousy on this point may often be very injurious to the welfare of the soul. No one, who knew Melise at all, could have well conceived of a more dutiful and affectionate daughter and sister; and yet she found the aid of a Priest who was not a relation of unspeakable value in preparing for that world where natural relationships

cease, and “they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the Resurrection.”

My father was at this time at Wilmslow; and, as he proposed visiting Torquay after Easter, it was thought that my mother and sister would return with him then. But, on the 29th of March, Melise's medical adviser recommended her return home as soon as possible. She did not like to travel in Holy Week, and they feared if she delayed till after Easter, she would be unable to be moved. They accordingly arranged to set out on Thursday, April 2nd, and wrote to me to meet them at Gloucester, and accompany them home. Melise had a very strong wish, if it were God's Will, to revisit the home of her childhood once more. It had always been very dear to her, as she once expressed it to a friend to whom she had been giving an account of some excursion:—“I am always delighted to get back; home is *more* than ‘four walls’ to me, it is the memories of twenty years;” and now that she was conscious of her approaching end, she felt more than usually desirous of returning.

I met them at Bristol, and was at first too much occupied with seeing my dear sister carried from one station to the other to take particular notice of her health. Still the languid way in which she, who was wont to be so active and independent of all assistance, resigned herself to be carried about by others, showed the extreme weakness to which she was reduced. When we were fairly settled in

the railway carriage, I noticed that her face bore signs of weariness and pain, and though when she was flushed with any excitement she would look quite herself; yet there was that indescribable air of languor about her whole person which marks the fatal progress of disease. Her nurse sat gazing at her with a sorrowful anticipation of the future, and we all felt that we were bringing her home to die; even the little dog seemed to wonder why her mistress took so little notice of her as she lay at her feet. In mind Melise appeared as vigorous as ever, and talked to me a great deal. She was so thankful that her mother was now resigned to part with her, and recounted the many mercies she had received from God, and the kindness all her friends, and some personally unknown to her, had shown her during her illness. She also seemed full of interest in all that related to the glory of God and the extension of His kingdom: asked many questions about the parish where I was working, listened gladly to all that I had to tell of my people, and appeared much interested in their welfare.

She bore the journey to Birmingham much better than we expected; and, though she passed but an indifferent night, was able to go on the next morning, and by God's great mercy we reached home in safety about three o'clock. I little thought as I supported her through the hall and up the stairs, that on that very day five weeks she would again pass that threshold a lifeless corpse; and when she returned the servants' welcome as they came to

meet her, she could not even herself have thought that the end was so near. We all flattered ourselves that the fatigue of the journey would pass away, and leave her better; and her medical man encouraged us to hope that she would be with us till the autumn at least: "but when the fruit is brought forth, *immediately* He putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."

At first we had some hopes that her native air was doing her good, but it soon appeared that the disease had descended from the lungs into the bowels, and thus all the nourishment she took was prevented from passing into the system, and she was in continual pain as long as it remained in her stomach. This suffering increased till her death, and was the appointed "rod" through whose chastening the Good Shepherd was pleased "to comfort" her in "the valley of the shadow of death." No murmur or expression of pain ever crossed her lips; but as she lay on the sofa in the drawing room the colour would at times vanish from her face, and a drawing up of the features would show us how heavy the cross sometimes was to bear. Still, she liked us to be with her, and would often join in the conversation.

I remained at home with Melise on the Sunday afternoon, and read part of the evening service, in which she joined. Afterwards, she began to speak of the future, and of the blessedness of being with CHRIST.

She said that that Hymn of S. Francis Xavier's

(given in page 45) was constantly on her lips, and she found it express exactly what she wanted. I rather doubted whether she fully understood the kind of love of God spoken of in those lines, and said something of that love which is purified from all self-interest and loves Jesus for Himself alone. "Can you quite understand that?" I asked—"O yes," she replied, "perfectly—I could not love Him for anything but Himself alone;" and then went on to say that to be with Him, where He is, wherever that might be, was the one desire of her heart. Remembering that many holy persons have had a great dread of death when it really approaches, I wished to know whether she had this fear. She answered: "Not at all; neither now, nor when I was ill before. But," she added, "I often fear perhaps I may have it when the end does really come—still, He has promised to be with me then, and so I am not uneasy about it." I asked her whether she found herself able to pray now she was so weak, and whether she did pray much: "Sometimes, when I am able, I do pray for others," she replied—"for myself, there is nothing I want. I know He is always there," she continued, looking as if she saw, with her bodily eyes, Him whom her soul loved, "and I want nothing more." She afterwards told me that He often filled her so full of joy that she did not know how to contain herself before others. Melise was to have received the Holy Communion on the Monday morning, but she passed such a bad night, and was so worn out, that she was glad to

defer receiving It till the next day, when It was administered to her before she left her room, her parents and the female servants communicating with us. She wished to be alone for some time afterwards, so that I saw little of her that day; and in the afternoon her cousin R—, who had lived with her as a sister in her childhood, but of whom since her marriage she had necessarily seen comparatively little, came in to the great delight of Melise, and indeed of all of us. As I bade her farewell the next morning on my return to my parochial duties, I little thought I should so soon be summoned to her bedside again. Her few parting words went to my heart with an indescribable power, especially the way in which she said "What a joyful meeting that will be which we shall soon have,—never to be parted more!"

During the remainder of Holy Week Melise continued to spend most of the day in the drawing room, and appeared much the same in health. She still took much interest in the parish and inquired after each particular person whom she had been used to visit. She watched with eagerness for the completion of some clothes for poor people and children which she had undertaken to finish by Easter, but which her failing strength obliged her to depute to others. She was unable also to write some farewell letters to her friends, especially to one in India, which she had hoped to have done.

The following was written for her by her cousin, to Miss L— —.

"Wilmslow Rectory, April 11th, 1857.

" My dearest L——,

" You will be surprised to find that we are at home again. We came back in so much haste that I had not time to let you know about it. I bore the journey very well indeed, travelling as far as Birmingham the first day, and on here the next. Thank you for your letters to me, I am always glad to hear from you. I lie on the sofa all day, and am sometimes able to do a few rounds of my knitting. * * It is a great comfort to be at home, and William came down with me, and was able to stay a few days, which I enjoyed very much."

The rest is written in her own hand in pencil.

" And now dear R—— is with me, and has kindly written this, for I am far too weak. It is a great comfort now to think God has made me the humble instrument of doing any one any good, and that I shall have some to rise up to witness for me at the last day. I am very comfortable and very happy; but I get fast weaker, and perhaps this is the last I shall write to you. So, goodbye—and God bless and comfort you, is the earnest prayer of

" Your loving sister in JESUS,

" MELISE."

In the course of Easter Week she made her will, and gave a few directions as to what she wished done with her books, jewels, &c., giving something to each of her friends and to each of the servants in and about the house. No one was forgotten.

Towards the end of the week her strength decreased very much, and on the Friday she was unable to leave her room except for a very short

time, and that quite late in the day ; on Saturday she was unable to leave it at all, and obliged to take to her bed. Her uncle, the physician who had prescribed for her ever since her childhood, paid her a farewell visit and spent the following Sunday with her. The accounts I received on Saturday and Sunday were so bad that I set out for Wilmslow on the Monday morning. That day my sister was worse than she had yet been : the pain was so great and the strength to resist it so feeble that she felt, as she quaintly expressed it, "quite smashed." When I arrived at home about eight o'clock she was unable to see me at first, but before I went to bed she sent for me. She was hardly able to speak, but wished to say how thankful she was that I had come, and asked me if she might have the Holy Communion the next day while she was yet sensible ; "and then," she added, "if I wish for It again afterwards, I can have It." She then bade me tell my father she was ready for him ; for he had been used since her return home to go into her room the last thing at night and pray with her.

On Tuesday, April 21st, it was my privilege to administer to my dying sister that provision for her last journey which JESUS has provided for His own in the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood. There were nine of us there all together. Melise was unable to sit up in bed during the service, and when my cousin lifted her up to receive her SAVIOUR, her wasted features told so unmistakeably of the near approach of death that I could with

difficulty repeat the words of administration. I shall never forget the expression of her face, it was so full of hungering and thirsting after Righteousness, with which she is now blessed in being filled. In the afternoon of the same day she sent for me, and we had our last conversation of any length. She expressed her thankfulness to God for enabling her to enter so fully into the sacred Mystery she had that day partaken of, and dwelt on the certainty and confidence the Presence of Jesus gave in the immediate prospect of death. We had been speaking on the words, "I know that my REDEEMER liveth," and dwelling on the power with which simple Faith in Him endues the soul in the very face of death, and she spoke of her own experience as an instance. "Yesterday, when I was so ill and in such pain, I began thinking over my miseries and how wretched I was, and I got quite low and dark —and then after some time I called to mind the sufferings of Jesus, and it seemed so ungrateful in me to be thinking of mine ; and as soon as I looked away from myself and to Him alone, all my darkness and clouds vanished, and I felt able to bear anything." She asked me after particular people in my parish, especially a dying boy and girl of whom I had spoken to her a fortnight before, and seemed so anxious to hear of their spiritual welfare. She then informed me of the arrangements she had made for my paying regularly a certain half-yearly sum to her nurse, and cautioned me against my carelessness and want of punctuality putting her to

any inconvenience. Afterwards, she told me what books she wished me to have, and what she would like given to others. She desired me to write after her decease to the clergyman who had visited her at Torquay to thank him for his kindness, and told me what a blessing GOD had made his visits to her. She told me she was unable to bear reading or prayer for any length of time—sometimes she liked to have hymns or psalms repeated to her, but she could not bear much.

The day after this (Wednesday) her suffering was very great, and she was unable to bear even our speaking in her room. Her face showed by its fixedness the effort it was to her to control herself, and when she found it impossible to avoid expressing the pain she endured she would contrive to get my mother out of the room that she might not have the pain of witnessing her sufferings. Melise was, during those silent hours, learning of Him, "Who was oppressed and afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth;" and He, Who when He putteth forth His own sheep goeth before them, was with her. In the evening her eye rested upon me sitting at the foot of her bed, and, I suppose, looking somewhat sad as I watched those sufferings I could not alleviate, and she uttered the only words I heard from her that day, "I have had such a happy day, William; it seems as if JESUS had been carrying me in His Arms all day long—He is so very good." The next day her pain becoming very great she asked me to pray for her, "but it must be very low,"

she added ; and again in the evening, as we were silently watching her and wondering at her patience, she called me and said, " Pray for me now, William, that I may be able to bear the cross more patiently." When I had concluded, and had repeated a few texts and one or two hymns, she thanked me, saying, " it helps me so much."

The medical man thinking it was improbable that Melise could live until Sunday, as her only nourishment was a little port wine and water, discontinued his visits after Thursday.

The prayers of some of the congregation of S. Bartholomew's Church, Moor Lane, London, for whom she prayed every day till nearly the last, and the prayer for which Church she had given to her mother with the request that she would continue to use it at noon-day, had been desired for her. She was unknown to them by face, but the Communion of Saints knows no obstacles of time or place, and she was regarded by many of them with very affectionate interest. My late brother-curate at that Church, wrote to tell me of the intercessions that were made for her, and begged if she were able that she would offer up one short prayer for S. Bartholomew's. She appeared too weak to bear any intelligence, and I forbore giving her the message. However, afterwards finding my mother had mentioned something of it to her, and hearing her express her sense of their Charity in so remembering her, I read the letter to her. She made no remark at the time, and it seemed as though she

had been too exhausted to listen ; but the following afternoon as I was sitting beside her, she turned to me and said, "I have not forgotten S. Bartholomew's." This was the more touching as she did not herself expect she would live through Thursday night.

On Friday she was able to bear a portion of the Litany, but said, " You must not expect me to respond;" and her mother and cousin were obliged now to say only a portion of the Psalms for the day, she had been accustomed to have read with her. In the afternoon she thanked me for having hung up a picture opposite the bed. It was "The Choristers," and the thoughts their attitude of praise suggests no doubt helped to refresh her spirit during these weary hours of suffering. I inquired whether she would like any other pictures, to which she replied, " I should like a small crucifix if you have one." Unfortunately I had not, but she instantly rejoined, " Never mind—I can always look at *Him*." However, we suspended over her head the well known photograph of the Crucifixion in which the two thieves are represented on either side of our SAVIOUR, and it seemed a help to her. She had never used or even liked devotional pictures while in health, and even now preferred "to look at *Him*;" but the effort of thinking at all fixedly was very great in her present exhausted state, and the mechanical aid of a visible representation of Him whom her soul loved, and whose Cross and Passion she now found her only comfort, was a real as-

sistance to her in following the example of His patience.

On the Saturday Melise appeared very much exhausted, and when another uncle arrived to bid her a farewell visit, she merely recognized him, and again closed her eyes. In the evening she spoke a little more, and as we were all sitting round her bed she looked at us, and, as though reading our thoughts and wishing to comfort us, said, "JESUS is very near when I am able to think." The same evening, when my father returned from his usual evening prayer with her, he remarked to us how full she seemed to be of the Presence of JESUS.

It may seem tedious to dwell upon such minute circumstances, but the last hours of the disciples of CHRIST have ever been full of interest to Christians, whether they have had to follow their LORD through the fires and tortures of martyrdom, or, whether, as in the case of the subject of this memoir, it is through the weariness of a lingering disease that He giveth His beloved sleep. For we must all pass through the same dark valley, and when we see how its terrors are removed by the Presence of Him Who hath overcome Death, we are encouraged the more earnestly to divest ourselves of all that hinders that intimate union with Him which alone can enable us to triumph over "the last enemy." There is also another reason why the deathbeds of Christians are so full of instruction. The Christian "is dead, and his life is hid with CHRIST in God;" his virtues will not appear in

their true glory until CHRIST Who is his Life shall appear, but even now he bears about in his body the dying of the LORD JESUS, that the Life also of JESUS might be made manifest *in his mortal flesh*; and hence it is that as the outward man perisheth, the inner man begins to shine forth through the veil of flesh with the glorious beauty of the resurrection Life of CHRIST. Virtues once hidden in humility now appear, uncorrupted by that which is fast crushing for ever the fairest qualities of nature; Faith anticipates its expansion into sight, Hope brightens into certainty, and Charity glows with a burning fire that mocks the icy hand of Death. Remembering these things, I may perhaps be pardoned for dwelling so much on incidents trivial in themselves, but valuable as showing that this child of God in the hour of death was enabled to practise the same beautiful thoughtfulness and care for the wishes of others, which every one seems to have especially noticed in her when in health. Two instances of this occurred on the Saturday on which her uncle arrived. He observed that the bed-clothes appeared to oppress her with their weight, and suggested that she should have them replaced by an eider down quilt which usually lay on her parents' bed. She refused to make the exchange, and seemed to prefer things as they were, but as soon as it appeared that her parents were not at that time using the quilt, she was quite willing to have it, and its lightness was a great relief to her. At another time, when she seemed incapa-

ble of attending to anything that was going on, her cousin was urging upon Melise's nurse, whose health was not at all strong, the necessity of taking some port wine regularly, a weak voice from the bed confirmed her advice : "Yes! and see that she takes it, R——."

On Sunday Melise appeared more herself, and asked her uncle several questions about his family and their health. In the morning I was sitting beside her looking over the sermon I was about to preach. She inquired whether I were going to preach in the morning, and what my text was. It was that on which we had conversed the preceding Monday : "I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c." After a little while, I said, "Will you give me a text for *next Sunday?*" It was not at all probable that she would live till then, and no doubt it seemed to her that I was asking for a text for her funeral sermon. Her humility seemed distressed with the idea of being alluded to in public, and shaking her head very decidedly, she answered, "No." Then appearing to reproach herself with ingratitude for being unable to fix upon any portion of that precious Word which had been a lantern to her feet and a Light unto her paths, she continued : "The text that has given me most comfort all through my illness is, 'He shall gather the lambs with His Arm, and carry them in His Bosom.'"

In the evening of the same day we were all hastily summoned into her room by Melise's nurse, who thought she observed a change coming over

her. But the faintness which had alarmed her having passed off, Melise sent us away again quite sorry that we had been disturbed. However, her state was such that my mother and cousin divided the night between them, and she no longer opposed their sitting up. The next morning she was a little better, and talked to her uncle on his taking his final leave of her. She said, "I hope we shall soon meet again;" and on his reminding her of a hymn which she and her cousin R——, used to sing as children, with a chorus "Oh, that will be joyful, when we meet to part no more," she replied, she had been trying to recollect it, but could not. Distressed at seeing her reduced so low, my mother tried to induce her to take some soup. Any food caused her such intense pain that she shrank at the bare mention of it, and said hastily, "No"—but almost immediately added, "I will if you wish it, dear mamma;" and on my mother saying that she need not unless she liked, she repeated, "If you think I ought to I will." Her countenance had completely lost that expression of childlike happiness it used to wear, and for the last two or three days was expressive of the deepest solemnity, as though she were gazing into eternity and already beheld its awful realities. I was never able to pray that her sufferings might be diminished, for it was evident that this light affliction was working for her a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and all I could ask for was that God would continue to support her with His grace, and

give her increased patience to persevere unto the end. One evening, I remember inquiring whether she was in much pain, to which she replied, "Not much now, but oh! so very weary. I did not think it would have been nearly so long as this." Her medical adviser, who came again to see her on Tuesday morning, was struck by the way in which she bore suffering, and observed that she had wonderful control over herself. About two o'clock on Wednesday morning Melise sent for us all, saying she wished to bid us good-bye while she was sensible. As one by one we entered her room, she stretched out her arms, and kissed each of us; and then lay with her hands clasped on her breast, apparently engaged in prayer. My father commended her into the hands of God, and we all expected the long looked for change to come. At last, feeling the symptoms which led her to expect her immediate dissolution pass off, she turned and said, "Don't watch, dear Papa—I am better now;" and shortly afterwards sent us all again out of her room. About seven o'clock she wanted to be raised up in bed, which she liked me to do for her, but would not let my mother call me till some time after she had heard me open my room door to take in my clothes, saying, "He will want a little more rest this morning;" and she apologized to all of us for calling us up so early. A young lady with whom Melise had been very intimate, wished to have seen her this afternoon, but though she had been desirous for her to come before, she felt un-

equal to seeing her. None of her friends would have recognized her, and it may be she wished to spare them the pain of witnessing her sufferings. She was still in full possession of her faculties ; the losing of her senses had been a subject of great uneasiness to her, and though she knew that it might be the Will of God that she should be so afflicted, yet she expressed her willingness to suffer any amount of physical pain, rather than to have anything to hinder her from communion with God. Her desire was granted ; for, though her memory was weakened, she was conscious to the last. At one time during this day, seeing me praying in her room silently she said, "Pray out loud, William." The next day (Thursday) she became more restless ; the earnest expression of calm endurance gave place to one of extreme lassitude, and she was unable to control herself as before. She spoke more, but would often forget herself, and then be distressed at her wanderings. Still she was very grateful to all who waited on her, and often apologized for giving so much trouble. Every position in which she lay gave her pain, and her aching limbs found no rest. After repeating some hymns to her, which seemed to soothe her, the following two verses were said :

" I heard the Voice of Jesus say,
Come unto Me and rest ;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon My Breast.

"I came to JESUS as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad ;
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad."

She exclaimed, "Oh ! I wish I could find that." I said, "Can you not find Him so?" To which she replied, "Oh ! yes ! I can—but yet I cannot—I feel as if I were *two*." Indeed it seemed sometimes as though her spirit had departed, and left the poor frail body to struggle alone with its deadly foe. She seemed at times to fear lest she should do or say something unworthy of her Christian character. In the evening she asked me whether I thought she would have much notice of the end, or whether it would come all at once. Of course I was unable to speak at all certainly, but considered that it might possibly be some days, and that she would probably have some notice of it. She answered, "I don't feel as if I should." As she still seemed to suffer much from weariness and pain, I spoke to her of the Death of JESUS, and the circumstances attending it; when she at once began contrasting her comforts of kind friends and every attention possible, with the last hours of Him Who "looked for some to have pity upon Him, but there was no man, neither found He any to comfort Him; but they gave Him gall to eat, and when He was thirsty they gave Him vinegar to drink." All through the night her restlessness would be quieted by a look at His crucified form, and the re-

membrance of what He had endured for her would repress any impatient thought.

On the morning of Friday (the Feast of SS. Philip and James), Melise appeared much the same as the day before ; and after service I was sitting in her room writing, when my attention was called to my mother, who was trying to compose her, and keep her from rolling off the bed. I went to her and repeated some verses of Scripture and Hymns, and she became quiet at once ; she inquired where the servants were, and where her cousin R—— was, some inward presentiments apparently prompting her to wish for us all to be with her, though she seemed to us talking quite at random. When she asked for me, my mother told her that I was in the room writing. She said, "He shouldn't leave me," accordingly I went to her again. After repeating the beginning of the Gospel for the Day, "In My FATHER's House are many mansions, &c," I dwelt on the words, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"—to which she replied, "It is a very hard way." After telling her of JESUS, Who alone makes the way easy by the sweetness of His Presence, and of the eternal rest afterwards, I repeated some verses of the hymn, "JESU lives!" to her ; when I reached,

" JESUS lives ! we know full well,
Nought from us His Love can sever ;
Life nor Death, nor powers of hell
Tear us from His keeping ever. Alleluia."

She became quite herself again, and said : "Yes !

He is near me now." She shortly after murmured, "Holy, Holy, Holy," I repeated the whole of the angelic hymn from the Liturgy, and she followed me, adding, "Glory be to Thee, O God." She then began to breathe very heavily, and my cousin coming in and seeing something unusual, called my father upstairs. She gave a slight moan as he took her hand, and gave one or two more heavy sighs,—there was a slight convulsion of her mouth, and then we waited anxiously for the succeeding breath—but it never came, and we knelt down and commended her soul into the hands of her blessed Redeemer, Who had thus taken her to Himself.

We could hardly believe she was really gone, for though we had been waiting and for the last few days almost wishing for the end to come, yet it came at last very unexpectedly. But the accompaniments of death soon brought it home to us, and the traces of pain remaining in the earthly tabernacle, showed it was far better for her to depart and be with CHRIST. I never saw any one so much changed by death before. She who had always appeared some years under her real age, now assumed the appearance of a woman of five-and-thirty, which manifested the extent to which she had suffered, and the efforts she must have made to prevent that suffering from showing itself.

On Friday, the 8th of May, we followed the remains of our beloved one into the Church where she had been baptized and confirmed, and where she had often knelt to pray and to receive the Meat

which endureth unto everlasting life. The vault (beneath the north-west part of the Chancel, in which reposed an infant brother whom Melise had never seen,) looked dark and cold as her brother committed to the dust the body of the only one whom he could ever call in a natural as well as in a spiritual sense, "sister;" but the Cross on her coffin shone bright out of the darkness of the tomb, and reminded us that, by the faith of Him who died and was buried, and rose again for us, our "sister's" body now sown in weakness shall be raised in power, a glorious body, in which she shall see for herself, with her own eyes, face to face, her living and soon returning REDEEMER.

And now it only remains for the author to express the hope that GOD would condescend to bless this account of his dear sister to the benefit of some of that Fold of which JESUS is the Shepherd, and that no errors or imperfections of his may mar its usefulness; and perhaps he cannot conclude better than by quoting the words of the clergyman who ministered to Melise before her return home:—

"The dear child was ripe for eternity, and her fruit might have been injured if it had been longer exposed to the blight and chill of this world. Most mercifully therefore has GOD taken her to His own shelter and hiding-place. She was as simple a child of faith as I ever held converse with, and I only regret that I did not know her sooner. All that you tell me of her last days and hours is very comforting—full of hope—and "hope brightening into

assurance. God's HOLY SPIRIT was her Teacher; and she truly fed upon the pasture which the Lamb of God led her to.—Now she sees Him always.

“Eternal rest give unto her, O LORD,
And let perpetual light shine upon her!
May she rest in peace!”

“Blessed be her memory to all who knew her,—blessed especially to those most dear to her—her father, mother, and brother. * * Her happy, peaceful face, how must the Angels have rejoiced to take it into their company! May God only fit us to follow her! may He make us also pure in heart that we may see GOD!” Amen.

ALL GLORY BE TO GOD.

A SERMON.

ISAIAH XL. 11.

"HE SHALL FEED HIS FLOCK LIKE A SHEPHERD : HE SHALL GATHER THE LAMBS WITH HIS ARM, AND CARRY THEM IN HIS BOSOM, AND SHALL GENTLY LEAD THOSE THAT ARE WITH YOUNG."

THE shepherds in the East feed their flocks in a very different manner to what they do here. Here the shepherd drives his flock before him, and frightens them into going the way he wishes ; but in the East the shepherd goes before his flock, and the sound of his flute, or his well-known voice calls the straggling sheep to the sweet pastures, or the refreshing waters, or invites them into the fold where they are safe from the attacks of the beasts of the forest who seek their prey by night. There the shepherd knows the countenance of each of his sheep, and they too know him ; and this intimate relationship between the shepherd and his flock, has been taken as the type of the relationship between king and subjects, and between priest and people. Thus we find David grieving over the pestilence his sin had brought upon his people : "I have sinned, and I have done wickedly, but

these sheep, what have they done?" And it is said that the LORD took him from the sheepfolds, "that he might feed Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance."

But in a higher sense than this, is it true of Him Who watches over all His creatures, that they are His sheep, especially is this true of those whom He hath chosen to Him to be His inheritance. Poor weak foolish souls as even the greatest of them are, how would God's elect ever be preserved amid all the dangers they have to pass through in this miserable world, were it not that the LORD is their Shepherd, therefore can they lack nothing? How gently, now in mercy, and now in judgment, did He lead His people Israel through the Red Sea and through the wilderness! and well might He be called the Shepherd of Israel. But then He led them by the hand of Moses and Aaron, He appointed under-shepherds, the priests who should feed His flock. In a little while, after they had been safely settled in their land, and the temple and its services were established, we find the Shepherd of Israel complaining of the neglect of His under-shepherds: "the pastors are become brutish, they have not sought the LORD." (Jer. ii. 8.)

It is a grievous charge He brings against them, and one at which every pastor of CHRIST's flock must tremble: "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye

clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed : but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them." (Ezek. xxxiv. 2, 3, 4.)

Ah, my brethren, Ezekiel could not have given a more faithful description of the disordered state of the Church now in these Christian days : "They were scattered because there is no shepherd : and they became meat to all the beasts of the field when they were scattered." Heresies and schisms, every species of false doctrine find some poor silly sheep of the LORD's flock ready to listen to them, and they perish in their misery. " My sheep wandered through all the mountains " of unbelief, " and upon every high hill " of vain-conceit and wilfulness : " yea My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them." (ver. 5, 6.)

Thank GOD ! this last has never been quite the case in the Christian Church ; but we have none to thank for this but Him Who founded His Church upon a Rock, so that the gates of hell should not prevail against it ; and Who has sent the HOLY GHOST to abide in His Church for ever, so that there may be always some who shall be able to say when they are commissioned to feed the sheep of JESUS,—" LORD, Thou knowest all things ; Thou

knowest that I love Thee." Whence then comes this superiority of the Christian Church over the Jewish? Thus saith the LORD GOD: "Behold I, even I will both search My sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." (Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 12.) And again, more clearly in the words of the text, we see that the LORD GOD was no longer to be afar off, but was to come in visible form,—"say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your GOD! Behold, the LORD GOD will come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him."

After this glorious description of the power and majesty of the SON of GOD, we should have expected some mighty work which should excite the instant wonder of every one, some display of His power and vengeance against His enemies, like as there shall be at the Judgment Day; instead of this, when we ask for the mighty work which required nothing less than the Incarnation of GOD to accomplish, we read,—"He shall feed His flock like a Shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." Truly, mercy rejoiceth against judgment, like the still small voice after the tempest, the earthquake, and the fire; like the terrible vision of the day of the

LORD, with something more than “the warrior’s battle of confused noise and garments rolled in blood,” “even with burning and fuel of fire,” when mercy interposes, and the prophet sings of peace, “for unto us a Child is born, unto us a SON is given.” (Isa. ix. 5; 6.) So here, all the strength and majesty of JEHOVAH seem to be put forth in exercising the tenderest offices of love, and God Himself declares His Almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity.

All these blessed promises were fully realized. God became the Son of Mary, “JESUS saw the multitudes, and was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd;” and when the appointed time arrived, He called the scattered sheep around Him, and declared in words that have thrilled through every broken heart these eighteen hundred years—words that shall last throughout eternity—“I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD.”

There was, we should perhaps have thought, hardly need for Him to *say* it, His actions proved it. See Him spending His days in weary journeys from city to city, to seek out the lost sheep of the house of Israel; faint and weary at the well of Samaria His meat and drink is still to do His FATHER’s will, that of them which He had given Him He should lose none. See Him seeking that which was driven away and bringing it again; see Him eating and drinking with publicans and sinners, healing that which was sick, and binding up

that which was broken. Look at Mary Magdalene, or Peter, or the thief on the cross, and see how the Good Shepherd strengthens that which is diseased. Listen to His voice as He calls, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not;" and see how He "gathers the lambs with His arm and carries them in His bosom;" listen how tenderly He comforts His disciples when showing them the sternest lessons of self-denial if they would follow Him: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your FATHER's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." And all this love and tenderness is summed up in that one most full, most loving sentence,—"The Good Shepherd giveth His Life for the sheep."

Yes, my brethren, at no less a price could the flock be purchased; nothing less than the *Blood of God* could atone for the sins of the whole world, or even for those of one of His sheep. And see with what willingness it is done: "No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." See Him on the Cross, snatching one of the poor lost sheep from the very jaws of that roaring lion of hell, as JESUS said, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." See His care for His sorrowing Mother, and His beloved disciple, even amid all the accumulated woes that were laid upon that wounded soul of His, for "He gently leadeth those that are with young." And now "It is FINISHED."—The Church is redeemed, the sheep

are free, and Easter tells us that the God of peace hath "brought again from the dead our LORD JESUS, that great Shepherd of the sheep." He hath given Him all power in heaven and earth, He hath given Him to be Head over all things to His Church, as He spake by the prophet Ezekiel. (xxxiv. 23.) "I will set up one Shepherd over them, and He shall feed them, even My servant David; He shall feed them, and He shall be their Shepherd." But as the flock is partly visible and partly invisible, so when the Chief Shepherd was about to depart out of this world, He made diligent proof of him to whom He would commit His sheep: "Lovest thou Me?" and then, as the highest proof of love, He bid S. Peter, and through him all the pastors of His Church to the end of time, "Feed My sheep, feed My lambs, feed My sheep." Notice this, my brethren: He does not say *thy* sheep, but *My* sheep, and all along it is the same; "Feed the flock of God which is among you." "Take heed unto all the flock over which the HOLY GHOST hath made you overseers to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own Blood." And at this day, when the Church invests her ministers with the pastoral office, she says, "Ye are called to be messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the LORD; to feed and provide for the LORD's family; to seek for CHRIST's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for His children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through CHRIST for ever. Have therefore always

printed in your remembrance, how great a treasure is committed to your charge. For they are the sheep of CHRIST, which He bought with His death, and for whom He shed His Blood." JESUS is the Good Shepherd still. From His throne in heaven He cheers the faith of His first martyr Stephen, He calls to the mad, wandering, wilful Paul, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?—I am JESUS Whom thou persecutest." And so ever since. No voice but His ever brought back the penitent sinner to the fold ; no sympathy but His can make self-denial, sufferings, tortures, and death real happiness to those who thus follow the LAMB whithersoever He goeth. Yes, the Church can always say, "we are His people and the sheep of His pasture."

Still, my brethren, though all this is perfectly and unalterably true with respect to the Church as the flock of CHRIST; this will not satisfy any soul that feels its weakness and stands in need of His everlasting Arm. The eternal purposes of GOD with respect to the Church are indeed full of comfort, and give us always abundant cause of thankfulness to Him,—but the question must be asked and answered too, "Am I one of His sheep?" Surely when we know that wolves and goats roam at large within the visible fold of CHRIST, we are not content to take it for granted because we are seemingly members of the Church, that therefore we are CHRIST's sheep. The time is fast approaching when the Good Shepherd will come again, and "He shall separate them one from the other, as a

shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats : and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left." You know what follows, brethren, and the question must be asked by each one of us, On which side shall we be ? It will be too late to ask it then,—ask it now, and you will not have cause to tremble then.

But you will say, 'how can I tell?' We are not left wholly in the dark ; it is true we cannot tell with an *absolute* infallible certainty, but the Good Shepherd has left us certain marks by which we may (if we only ask for the enlightening power of the HOLY GHOST to show us) easily discern whether we are of His sheep or not. "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."

1. They hear His voice. I am "known of Mine." "It is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh." Never man spake like this Man. The voice of conscience speaks, and that is the voice of God to us,—it warns us of our danger, but it generally threatens—Jesus never does. He always speaks "Peace." Those who hear His voice understand what I mean. That voice is quite different from the voice of conscience. It is true that Jesus says things that are hard to flesh and blood, "Take up thy cross and follow Me," but His voice is so full of love and sweetness, that the cross becomes light and easy. If we turn away, He does not threaten us; if we deny Him, He does not deny us *now* : He will only *look*, and let us see how much He suffers ; if we betray Him, He still says,

"Friend, wherefore art thou come?" But if we do persist in turning away and refuse to follow, we shall never hear that voice again till the Judgment Day. If we have heard it once we can never forget it however we may try. But "My sheep *hear* My voice—not once or twice, but habitually. And as JESUS was never at rest until He reached His FATHER's throne, so His sheep will soon cease to hear His voice unless "they follow Him."

2. This is the second mark of election : "they follow Me." Many may mistake their own imaginations for the voice of JESUS, but there is no mistake about this mark, "they follow Me." The way of the Cross is streaked with blood—sorrow and suffering are the thorns which always in this world of sin encompass the Rose of Sharon. There is no other way to Paradise than the narrow thorny way which JESUS trod. CHRIST is "the Door," CHRIST is "the Way,"—all other ways are delusive, for CHRIST is "the Truth;" but there is a bright and glorious crown beyond, for CHRIST is "the Life." "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand." This is the

3rd, and final mark of election : "He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved." This is a mark which the great Day alone can determine, and yet we know that it already belongs to those who sleep in JESUS. "I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues,

stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Who are these, and whence come they? "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Such, my brethren, is the flock of which JESUS is the Shepherd. I have not time to speak of the fold He has provided for us even here; nor to say much of the green pastures of the Holy Scriptures into which He leads His flock; nor of the living waters of the HOLY SPIRIT with which He refreshes them when they are faint and ready to despair; nor can I tell you of that most precious food, even His own very Body and Blood, which the Good Shepherd gives in His Church for the life of the world. This is the means whereby the souls of His elect are strengthened to bear the sufferings which are necessary to their purification, for it is the communication of the two-fold nature of CHRIST which enables those who feed on Him to overcome even as He overcame. It strengthens their faith, and feeds the expiring flame of their

charity, and in the power of that Meat they can "go from strength to strength until before the God of gods every one of them appeareth in Zion." Taste and see for yourself how gracious the LORD is. There is one cure for every disease—one comfort for every sorrow—one refuge in every time of need: "The LORD is *My* Shepherd, therefore *can* I lack nothing."

And now, dear brethren, can you say that the LORD is *your* Shepherd? Have you really given Him your hearts? and have you heard His voice? above all, are you following Him, or at least earnestly trying to do so? The time is short—far too short to prepare for eternity; if you have not yet fairly begun, it is at least time to ask what you mean to do. Death is unsparing, the young as well as the old are cut down by his inexorable hand. You know how it is that I am here to-day; you know, and some of you feel, the loss we have sustained. But the misery would be intolerable if we had not as clear evidence as is possible on this side the tomb, for believing that she, over whose early grave we shall meet on Friday, is safe and at rest for ever in the arms of the Good Shepherd. Long ago, when but a child of ten or twelve years old, she could hear the Shepherd's voice; and those who knew her best can tell how earnestly she tried to follow Him. Death for her had no terrors, for she had for the last two years and more been waiting for it and looking for it, as the blessed day that would admit her to the presence of her SAVIOUR;

when she should no longer be separated from Him whom her soul loved ; and she should rest in peace with CHRIST, until that body which now lies like a faded withered flower shall awake up from its sleep after His likeness, and in her flesh she shall see the blessed face of JESUS and be with God for ever ; when “ there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying : neither shall there be any more pain : for all the former things shall have passed away.” Oh, indeed, JESUS does feed His flock like a shepherd ; her weak frame could never have borne the suffering and weariness He was pleased to lay upon her, but that she felt His presence with her, as she once expressed it after a day of more than usual suffering : “ It seems as though JESUS had been carrying me in His arms all day long.—He is so very good.” In fact, the text which she found most constantly recurring to her mind was this that I have been preaching on now : “ He shall feed His flock like a shepherd ; He shall gather the lambs with His arm and carry them in His bosom.” Yes ! there is safety *there*—“ they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.”

“ JESU lives ! we know full well,
Nought from us His love can sever ;
Life nor death or power of hell,
Tear us from His keeping ever.
Alleluia.”

Oh ! who can tell what glories, hidden from us, that liberated spirit knoweth now ; the angel’s

eucharistic song, part of which were the last words we heard her speak—"Holy, holy, holy, LORD GOD of hosts—Glory be to Thee, O God"—is no longer a matter of faith; and that cold tongue now still in death shall soon awake to join the everlasting chorus which rings for ever and for ever around the throne of God and of the LAMB.

¹My children, you will never hear her voice again on earth; she will never more try to win you to the love of JESUS whom she had found such a loving Shepherd. Often did she consult me about you, and ask how she could best lead you to Him; and now she is gone. But do not let her lessons pass away from your memories; you feel deeply now, but unless you really have JESUS for your Shepherd these feelings will soon pass away. Now, while your hearts are softened by sorrow for your teacher, who has been taken away; now, while they are tender, before they are hardened by mixing with the world, before you have acquired any fixed habit of sin, come to Him Who so lately received you at the font, and say with all your heart: "O blessed JESUS, Thou Who hast said, suffer little children to come unto Me, look upon one of Thy poor weak sinful lambs. Come, and be my Shepherd, take me in Thine arms, and keep me safe from sin and danger, and bring me at last to Thy heavenly kingdom. Amen." He will certainly

¹ These words were spoken to the children of the Sunday school, by whom my sister was much beloved, and are written now from memory.

hear you and answer you, and though you may have many troubles and many very sore temptations before you leave this world, yet if your hearts are given to JESUS you will have nothing to fear, for "He shall gather the lambs with His arm and carry them in His bosom."

There are others too, dear brethren, for whom the Good Shepherd cares : " He shall gently lead those that are with young." See Him full of compassion for the widow of Nain as He said, " Weep not :" hear Him whisper to the sorrowing Martha, " Thy brother shall rise again ;" catch the precious words that fall from His dying lips into the deep wound the sword was making in His Mother's heart, and remember that " JESUS CHRIST is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Come then, all ye that mourn, look down into the dark narrow home where the worm is waiting to feed upon what you loved so much. It is dark, damp, chilly ; what a dull heavy sound the first clod that falls upon the coffin has ; but even from that valley of dry bones a stream of living water flows, for JESUS has been there, and speaks to all who have ears to hear. " I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen. And have the keys of hell and of death." " Thy dead men shall live, together with My dead Body shall they arise." For " I am the Resurrection and the Life : he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." Yes, beloved, this is one of the

greatest blessings..that the knowledge of God, which is eternal life, brings, “that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.”

No mere human sympathy can heal the wound which bereavement makes; no one but He Who not only made the heart, but has a human heart Himself, can so swallow up death in victory as to make the widowed heart sing for joy. But if we are one with Him, we are one with all who sleep in Him. Natural ties are snapped, but the communion of saints lives on in the living Body of Him Who is the Resurrection and the Life. We may weep, for “JESUS wept;” but we may “not sorrow as men without hope for them that sleep in Him.” Rather let us look forward, “for the maid is not dead but sleepeth,” to that blessed time when He shall come, and God shall bring with Him all that sleep in JESUS. Let us hasten to be ready for that day, let us lay aside every weight and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto JESUS. He, in whose arms our beloved one rests, will comfort us, for He knows our sorrow, and His own Word assures us that “He shall gently lead those that are with young.”¹

¹ This is of course only one of the many blessed meanings of this part of the text. It applies to those who travail with the Word of God, i.e., are in the throes of repentance (Isaiah xxvi. 17, 18); to those who like S. Paul travail in birth for others, especially parents and pastors, and generally to all whom the Good Shepherd invites, “Come unto Me,” &c.

My brethren, it may be that there are some, I fear many, among you, who know nothing, and care nothing about the love of Jesus for His sheep. It may be that you think we do not quite mean what we say when we speak of these things; you think religious people have a peculiar way of talking, which clergymen and women understand, but that it does not much concern you. And yet you feel at times a heavy load of care on your heart. You think of death and then you put the thought away again,—for death to you has a terrible sting, and that is "*Sin.*"

Perhaps you think it is impossible that you can ever be religious, or you fancy a change may come over you when you are old or sick. My brethren, if you have ever watched sick people, you must know that sickness is the very worst possible time to pray,—we want the good Shepherd to carry us then: it is miserable work just setting out to try and find Him. But for the most hardened, the most careless among you there is hope, for "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Not *one* of you can say *you* are out of the reach of His mercy now. You cannot be more than "*lost,*" and yet it is just the "*lost*" that He is come to seek and save. Will you have Him? Will you say, "O Blessed, merciful SAVIOUR, Thou art indeed the Good Shepherd; Thou hast given Thy life for Thy sheep,—behold, I am that lost wandering sheep Thou camest down from heaven to save. I have indeed gone astray like a sheep that is lost: O seek Thy servant, for I

do not forget Thy commandments." He will certainly hear you and answer you ; He never despised a broken heart yet, and He never will. Come then all, come ye that are lost, come ye that have turned back again to your own wickedness,—ye that are weary and heavy laden, ye that labour hard with some sorrow that is too bitter for your heart to bear ; ye that are struggling earnestly along the narrow way, and yet seem unable to get on, to JESUS the Good Shepherd come in hearty childlike confidence, and trust yourselves to Him,—for " He shall feed His flock like a shepherd, He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

ALL GLORY BE TO GOD.

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